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MEMORIALS

OF

CHRISTIAN LIFE

IN

THE EARLY AND MIDDLE AGES.

INCLUDING HIS

"LIGHT IN DARK PLACES."

BY

DR. AUGUSTUS NEANDER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY J. E. RYLAND.

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DEDICATION OF VOL. II.

TO THE REVEREND DR. HARMS,

FIRST PREACHER IN THE CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS AT KIEL,
ECCLESIASTICAL PROVOST, ETC. ETC.

I RECOLLECT that when I had the pleasure of seeing you some years ago, you expressed to me—what very probably you have long since forgotten—your sympathy with this undertaking for the general cause of Christianity, and even remonstrated with me for not carrying it on. If anything whatever, certainly such language from your lips—the lips of such a witness and combatant for the cause of Christ—would be an incentive to me. I would gladly have saluted you with it on your jubilee, in which with so many others I took a cordial interest; but as this was not possible, I beg you to accept, with your accustomed kindness, this volume, which contains a continuation of the sketches, as a supplementary gift, and as a small token of the sincere respect and love with which the author calls himself

Yours,

A. NEANDER.

Berlin, August 15, 1846.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

I now publish the Second Volume of my Sketches from the History of the Christian Life, which are taken from the same point of view as the first. Those which relate to the missionary history of the Middle Ages, closing with Raimund Lull, appear to form a small finished whole by themselves, on which account I have not extended this part any further. In this, as in the former volume, I have given only the results of my studies in reference to the Christian life, without anything which in itself can claim the attention of scholars or give it a scientific value. May the Lord accompany with his blessing these testimonies to that which, coming from above and raised above the changes of time, directs our looks above—these records of the motions of His Spirit in the lives of believers as manifested amidst all the distractions of humanity, which point to the source of the stream that flows through all ages!

The profits of this volume are devoted to the object so dear to my heart, mentioned in the Preface to the first—the benefit of the Society of Students called after my name, for the support and relief of their sick and indigent associates. I mention this in order to add, that if any reader should, in consequence of this statement, be disposed to contribute to this object, I shall gratefully receive every gift of love. My dear and respected colleague, Counsellor Lichtenstein (to whom we are deeply indebted for the care with which he manages the financial concerns of the Society), has also expressed his willingness to receive contributions for the same object, in consequence of the kindly interest he takes in it.

In conclusion, I heartily thank my dear young friend, Mr. Schneider, for the attention he has paid to everything connected with the correction and printing of the work. It will gratify, I hope, not a few readers that Mr. Schneider has again taken the trouble to copy some select original passages.

A. NEANDER.

Berlin, August 15, 1846.

NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

The work now translated originally appeared in three volumes, Berlin, 1822; a second edition was published in 1825–1827; a third edition of Vol. I. was published at Hamburgh in 1845, and of Vol. II. in the following year.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION OF VOL. I.

The work which I now publish in an amended form, was undertaken from a desire to excite and cherish in the minds of persons who were not devoted to the study of theology as a science, a consciousness of the unity of that Christian Spirit which has been in action through every age of the church, and which connects us with all that has flowed from the operation of the Holy Spirit since its first effusion—to awaken an interest for everything which has proceeded from this Spirit—to let the testimonies drawn from actual life, speak for general edification and instruction—and to lead to a recognition at once of the Unity of that Spirit, and of the variety that exists in its forms of manifestation. Accounts from several quarters have reached me that this attempt has not been altogether in vain. I recollect especially some beautiful lines which I received from Schleiermacher, when the first part of these sketches appeared in the year 1822, in which he expressed to me his deep interest, as a practical clergyman, in this undertaking.

As the object for which these sketches were first published seems equally suited to the wants of the present times (though changed in many respects from the former), I am desirous that this work, of which the first volume has been long ago out of print, should not sink into oblivion. And I wish to construct these historical delineations in a manner more corresponding to their object, to make them still more popular, and to remove all philosophical discussion, which will find a place with more propriety in my larger Church History. On this account, and to give a greater unity to the whole, I have been obliged, much to my regret, to omit several contributions from other persons. I hope that my dear friend Dr. Tholuck will not allow his Essay on the Moral Influence of Heathenism to be lost, but present it to the public in some other form. The First and Second Volumes are now thrown into one.

I have endeavoured, as far as my other engagements would permit, to perfect the form and contents of these sketches, and to enrich them with new ones.

These delineations, which make not the least pretension to scientific value, are designed only to meet the wants of Christians in general. Yet possibly it would gratify many a younger or older theologian who makes use of these testimonies of the Christian life, to read, in the original, several important and beautiful passages from the Fathers, which are here translated; therefore my dear young friend Mr. Schneider (theological candidate from Silesia), who has compiled all the indexes, and corrected the proof sheets, and whose diligence, zeal, and fidelity have been of great service, has taken the trouble to see to the printing of these passages. My hearty thanks are due for all his exertions.

The profits of this work were, from the first, devoted to the benefit of poor and deserving students of theology. Nothing can diminish my interest in an object so dear to my heart; it rather supplies a fresh motive to resume and continue the work. But as the so-called Neander Society has been since formed for the same purpose, the amount will be added to its capital, or transferred to it for distribution.

As these sketches are intended to testify of the one (and in the true sense (Catholic Church—which rests on an immoveable foundation, even Christ—they are dedicated to all the members of this church, under whatever form of constitution they may be scattered; and may the Spirit of the Lord accompany them and make them a blessing to such!

A. NEANDER.

Berlin, August 5, 1845.

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PART I.

CHRISTIAN LIFE OF THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES.

CHAPTER I.

VARIOUS METHODS OF CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY.

The manifold wisdom of God, of which the Apostle of the Gentiles speaks in Eph. iii. 10, is conspicuously exhibited, not less than his inexpressibly condescending love, in the variety of leadings by which men are brought, according to their different abilities and constitutional peculiarities, to the attainment of the one great object, *Redemption*. At the same time we here recognise a striking peculiarity of the gospel, which distinguishes it from all human systems, that it is designed and suited for human nature under all its conditions and relations; the inexhaustible riches it contains are shown by the fact, that all the wants arising from the moral nature of man are satisfied by it alone; it alone heals all the diseases of the inner man, and in the greatest diversity of method influences, by its divine power, the various peculiarities of humanity. As Christ, during his life on earth, visibly attached to himself men of the most different characters, by methods equally different, so he operates invisibly by his gospel throughout all ages of the Church.

Some persons experienced the Saviour's miraculous power in the relief of their bodily maladies, and thus knew him first as a temporal benefactor; they were not conscious of any higher wants, but by the powerful aid of this kind which they had received from him, they were led to receive him as the 'sent of God,' endowed with divine power, and became receptive of those higher gifts which he was ready to impart.

No sooner had they received his words into their hearts than they recognised in Him, from whom they had at first sought only bodily relief, a Redeemer from that internal unhappiness of which they now became conscious by the light which he shed upon them. Others who were already in a higher stage of spiritual development, had passed, in their wants and wishes, beyond immediate earthly interests; dissatisfied with the present they longed for the regeneration of the world, and their faith in the ancient promises of Jehovah led them to expect that it would be effected by the Messiah who was to come. Those in whom such anticipations had been so far developed, were incited by the miraculous acts in which Christ manifested his divine power, to receive him as the promised Messiah. It is true, that their longing after a better order of things was still involved in carnal representations; they did not yet recognize the nature of that true freedom which was to be expected from the Messiah; but still they believed in him as the Messiah, and in this faith had surrendered their hearts to him; the truth which they had received from his lips became gradually verified as that which conferred true spiritual freedom and sanctification; and at last they acknowledged that "the kingdom of God consisted not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." They learned to form a more correct judgment respecting the nature of the new dispensation, when they had begun to experience its power in their inward life.

Another class of persons came to the Saviour, who felt themselves burdened with grievous sins. Repulsed and condemned by the zealots for the law, who were destitute of that love without which everything else is only as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, they took refuge with Him who, though the Holy One, was meek and lowly of heart, and invited to himself all the weary and heavy laden. He poured a healing balm into the hearts of these contrite sinners, by announcing the forgiveness of sins, and blending heavenly grace with heavenly majesty. They loved much because much was forgiven, and love taught them to understand and practise his divine teachings. Others came to him, who (although it appeared mysterious that it was necessary to be born again of the Spirit,) had not only led a blameless life before the world,

but were actuated by an earnest and sincere moral striving; they stood in an unconscious connection with the Fountain of all goodness and of all light; they were already convinced, that to love God above all, and their neighbours as themselves, was more than all burnt-offerings, and of them the Lord could affirm, that they were not far from the kingdom of God, although they were not yet in it. Since they loved the light, and hated the works of darkness, this internal attraction to the light led them to Him who was the light of the world, in order that they might become the children of the light. There were youths of ardent affectionate hearts, who had hitherto lived in an unconscious innocence, as far as it was possible for human beings. Their hearts were captivated by the Divine in the appearance and the discourses of the Redeemer, without their being able to give an explanation of it. By intimate intercourse with him, by cordial love to him, the ideal of humanity, the ideal of holiness, was impressed on their hearts, and in its light the hidden evil of their own souls was exposed; they recognized at once their own spiritual malady, and in the divine Physician, to whom they were attached by ardent love, that being who alone could impart a cure. The ignorant came to Him, and learned those truths that were hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed to babes. And there were Scribes, masters in Israel, who esteeming themselves wise in their dead legal knowledge, were astonished to hear of things which hitherto they had never surmised; and in the light of the divine wisdom which now beamed upon them were first made sensible of their blindness, and thus received their sight. To one who was influenced with desire only to catch a sight of him, he gave more than he had ventured to wish. Another, while persecuting him with a mistaken zeal for the law, he forcibly drew to himself, and by the power of his all-conquering love converted the infuriated enemy into a devoted disciple. Some, after seeking for pearls, and finding many of great beauty, at last found the most beautiful one, of surpassing brilliancy, and joyfully surrendered all they had to make this precious pearl their own. Others, without seeking, unexpectedly lighted on the treasure hid in a field.

This diversity of ways by which men were led to the gospel according to the diversity of their natural peculiarities and

previous habits of life, was very strikingly exemplified on the first appearance and spread of the gospel in the heathen world. Many, before they were awakened to the necessity of seeking truth and righteousness, were led by deliverance from bodily suffering, which they obtained in answer to the believing prayers of Christians, to a participation in the spiritual blessings of heavenly good. We are reminded of persons who in severe illnesses had in vain sought aid from the scientific practitioners of the healing art. or from the dealers in magic, on which much reliance was placed in that age of excitement and false pretensions; it might happen that one of this class was brought into the society of a Christian. When the Christian was informed by the sick man that he had sought the help of his gods in vain, he seized the opportunity of telling him of the numbers healed by Christ while he lived on earth, and how many similar cures he performed after his ascension, by the instrumentality of the apostles. He appealed in child-like faith to his Redeemer, that he would be pleased to manifest the glory of his heavenly Father, and glorify him among men. The sick man was restored to health, and thus was brought to see the worthlessness of his gods, and to acknowledge the God revealed in Christ as the only true God, to whom he was indebted for the cure of his bodily malady, and in his most important relation to men as the Physican of souls.

Mental diseases are wont to be reckoned among the symptoms of an age of internal variance and distraction, and such to an extraordinary degree was the age of which we are speaking. There were many persons who felt, as it were, subdued and fettered by a foreign power. It was as if two opposing personalities dwelt within them, their own self and an evil spirit, who would not allow the former to act for itself, but injected his own thoughts and words, and thus compelled it into complete subserviency to his bidding. As such persons believed they were possessed by evil spirits, they were called demoniacs. Enthusiasts and deceivers, both Jews and Gentiles, such as we find mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, Simon Magus and Elymas, took advantage of their calamitous condition, and pretended that they could expel the evil spirits by various incantations and unmeaning ceremonies. When devout Christians met with such unfor-

tunate individuals, they recognized the kingdom of evil in its destructive influence on mankind; but they were also convinced that their Lord had overcome this kingdom, and that its powers could not prevail against him and his faithful followers. In this faith they invoked him, that he would here manifest his victorious power. The whole heathen world with its idolatries and sinful practices, henceforward appeared to the pagan, who had been thus cured, as the kingdom of darkness, and he passed from it into the kingdom of Christ, to whom, after experiencing his transforming moral power, he felt indebted for being made every whit whole; as the Lord himself said, the evil spirits could be truly driven out only by the Spirit of God, and unless *He* took possession of the house in which the evil spirit had dwelt, this latter would return with seven others, and the latter end of that man would be worse than the first.

The Christian fathers of the first ages frequently appealed to the fact of such cures even before the heathens themselves, and particularly pointed out that they were effected, not by magical incantations or impositions on the senses, but by simple prayer proceeding from the hearts of believers. Thus Justin Martyr, in the times of Marcus Aurelius, says, when he wishes to show that Christ had freed men from the power of evil spirits, "You may observe this from what passes before your eyes; for many of our Christian people, in different parts of the world, and in your city, by calling on the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, have cured many who were possessed of evil spirits, who could not be cured by any exorcists or practisers of magic, and such cures are still effected." And rather later in the second century, Irenæus says, "In the name of the Son of God, his true disciples who have received grace from him, labour for the good of their fellow-men, according as each one has received his gift from Him. Some expel evil spirits in a sure and certain manner, so that frequently those who have been purified by them from evil spirits become believers, and are received into the church. Others heal the sick by the laying on of hands. Many who have died have been brought to life again, and continued a number of years among us. And innumerable are the gifts of grace which the church throughout the world has received from God, and which are daily

employed, in the name of Jesus Christ who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, for the benefit of the heathen, without making a traffic of them (like those itinerant exorcists and conjurers); for as they are received freely from God, so they are freely dispensed. Nothing is done by the invocation of angels (as the Theosophists of that day, with their pretended higher knowledge of the spiritual world; 'the worshipping of angels,' alluded to in Col. ii. 18); nothing by incantations and other impertinent intrusions into the invisible world; the only means they employ is to direct their prayers to the Lord, the Creator of all things, and to call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." In the beginning of the third century, Tertullian at Carthage, in his Apology for the Christians, which he addressed to the Roman governor of the provinces, Scapula, appeals to the fact, that he had persons in official situations about him who, however they might exclaim against the Christians, had received benefits from them; "for the notary is one, since, when he was thrown into a paroxysm by an evil spirit, he was freed by a Christian; others are indebted to a Christian for the restoration of a relative or a child. And how many honourable persons (for we will not here speak of those who belong to the populace) have been freed from possession by evil spirits or from illnesses."

In the third century, at a time when Christianity began to exercise great power over the mental atmosphere, and much intercourse existed between heathens and Christians, many persons received impressions of Christianity which operated unconsciously in the interior of their minds, and occasioned remarkable mental phenomena both by day and by night; so that to a person who had not diligently watched the secret processes in the development of his mind, many things might appear to be quite sudden, which yet had for a long time been unconsciously preparing in the laboratory of his soul. Thus, an individual, through a sudden revolution of his inner life, inexplicable to himself, and yet for which suitable preparation had been made, might be carried away by the force of Christian principles, and be converted from a vehement opposer to a devoted advocate of Christianity. To such phenomena Origen appeals when he says, in his first book against Celsus, "that many, as it were, against their will,

have been brought over to Christianity; since a certain spirit suddenly turned their reason from hatred against Christianity into zealous attachment, even at the cost of their lives, and presented certain images before the soul, either when awake or dreaming."

Although such appearances were regarded by those to whom they happened as the effect of something external, yet they were pure operations which proceeded from the internal power of Christianity by which their minds were overpowered. Moreover, all external appliances could only serve—in the case of earthly-minded men, who felt no moral solicitude which might serve as a point of connection for the gospel—to awaken them first of all from their stupidity, and make them receptive of the divine power of the gospel. By a continued succession of miracles, Christianity could not have taken a firm hold on human nature, if it had not penetrated it by its divine power, and thus verified itself to be indeed that which alone can satisfy the higher necessities of the inner man. This divine power of the gospel revealed itself to the heathen in the lives of Christians, which "showed forth the virtues of him who had called them out of darkness into his marvellous light, and enabled them to walk as the children of God, in the midst of a perverse generation, among whom they shone as lights in the world." This announcement of the gospel by the life operated even more powerfully than its announcement by the word. "Our Lord," says Justin Martyr to the heathen, "does not wish us to use force, and to be imitators of the wicked, but he exhorts us by the power of patience and gentleness to rescue all men from a life of shame and evil desires. And this we are able to demonstrate in the case of many who belonged to you, who have been changed from being violent and tyrannical men either by observing the endurance in daily life of their (Christian) neighbours, or their extraordinary patience when defrauded by their fellow-travellers, or having proved them in business-transactions."* They saw Christians meet death in the confi-

* Οὐ γὰρ ἀνταίρειν δεῖ· οὐδὲ μιμητὰς εἶναι τῶν φαύλων βεβούληται ἡμᾶς, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ πραότητος ἐξ αἰσχίνης καὶ ἐπιθυμίας τῶν κακῶν ἄγειν πάντας προετρέψατο. Ὃ γὰρ καὶ ἐπὶ πολλῶν τῶν παρ' ὑμῖν γεγενημένων ἀποδεῖξαι ἔχομεν· ἐκ βιαίων καὶ τυράννων μετέβαλον ἡττηθέντες, ἢ γειτόνων καρτερίαν βίον παρακο-

dence of their faith with the greatest firmness and cheerfulness, oftentimes amidst extreme tortures; and this spectacle must have made a deeper impression, if they believed that these enemies of the gods, of whom popular fanaticism had spread the vilest and most monstrous reports, had been guilty of unnatural crimes. Many asked, what gives men such energy to do and suffer everything on account of their convictions, in an age of such abject weakness, when we see all things bending before earthly power? Whoever proposed this question endeavoured to make himself acquainted with Christianity; and the consequence was, that the inquirer became captivated with the truth of the divine doctrine. To such facts Tertullian appeals in addressing the Proconsul Scapula: "Whoever witnesses such endurance is disturbed as by some scruple of conscience, and is impelled to inquire what there is in the affair; and when he has ascertained the truth, forthwith follows it."* And towards the end of his Apology, he says, "Our numbers increase the oftener you cut us down. The blood of Christians is seed. Many among you have exhorted to the endurance of pain and death, as Cicero in his Tusculans, as Seneca, as Diogenes, as Pyrrho, as Callinicus; yet their words do not find so many disciples as Christians make by the teaching of their actions. That very obstinacy with which you reproach us is an instructress. For who is not struck by contemplating it, and led to inquire into the nature of our profession? And who that has inquired does not join us, or having joined, is not eager to suffer?"† Such was the experience

λουθήσαντές ἢ συνοδοιπόρων πλεονεκτουμένων ὑπομονὴν ξένην κατανοήσαντες ἢ συμπραγματευομένων πειρασθέντες. Justin. *Apol. maj.* fol. 63, tom. i, p. 170. ed. Otto. (Jenæ, 1842.)

* Nec tamen deficiet hæc secta, quam tunc magis ædificare scias, cum cædi videtur. Quisque enim tantam tolerantiam spectans, ut aliquo scrupulo percussus et inquirere accenditur, quid sit in causa; et ubi cognoverit veritatem, et ipse statim sequitur.—Tertullian. *ad Scapulam.*

† Plures efficimur, quoties metimur a vobis; semen est sanguinis Christianorum. Multi apud vos ad tolerantiam doloris et mortis hortantur, ut Cicero in Tusculanis, ut Seneca in Fortuitis, ut Diogenes, ut Pyrrhon, ut Callinicus; nec tamen tantos inveniunt verba discipulos, quantos Christiani factis docendo. Illa ipsa obstinatio, quam exprobratis, magistra est. Quis enim non contemplatione ejus concutitur, ad requirendum quid intus in re sit? Quis non ubi requisivit, accedit? Ubi accessit, pati exoptat?—Tertull. *Apol.*

of Justin Martyr when he thought that he had found in the Platonic philosophy that satisfaction for his religious necessities which the ancient popular faith could not furnish, and had his attention first drawn to Christianity by the calumnies propagated against its professors; as he himself tells us in his larger Apology, "While I was delighted with the doctrine of Plato, and heard the Christians calumniated, but saw them fearless in the prospect of death, and of all other things which are wont to be dreaded, I judged it impossible that they could live in vice and debauchery."

There was also a diversity in the course of the inner life by which men were rendered receptive of the gospel, or by which that moral craving which can find satisfaction in Christianity alone, was excited in their hearts. In many persons a powerful but indistinct sense of guilt was aroused. Their consciences placed before them the wrath of an estranged Deity, and in the anguish of their souls they beheld themselves surrounded by evil spirits, who endeavoured to ensnare them. But as long as they did not understand their own moral condition, and had no one at hand either able or willing to throw light upon it, (for their priests and Goetæ could only lead them further into error,) they sought for the grounds of the divine wrath, and the method of reconciliation with offended heaven in *outward things;* for man, who is least at home with himself, is always disposed to seek out of himself what he ought to seek in the depths of his own being. Hence arose the numberless forms of superstition, in which a conscience ill at ease takes refuge. The unhappy life of those men who day and night were haunted by the spectres of their own anguish, has been depicted by a profound observer of the mental phenomena of his age (Plutarch), in his work on superstition and unbelief. "While awake," he says, "they do not use their reason, and when asleep they are not free from the sources of disquietude; their reason always dreams: their fear is always awake; they are without a refuge."

This noble-minded man, who was not far from the kingdom of God, but who had not beheld the moral order of the universe and human nature in the light of the gospel, was mistaken in supposing that only false notions of the nature of the gods were the source of such superstition, and that by

indicating what was erroneous in these notions superstition might be conquered. Those erroneous views were not accidental, but necessary; they had a deeper foundation, and a foundation in truth. It was of no use, though it might succeed for an instant, to convince these unhappy men that they tortured themselves with groundless fears. As long as their not merely imaginary, but real inward malady, was not healed, so long must new images of terror be constantly rising before them. It was in vain to say that the gods were not envious, hostile beings, that nothing but good was to be expected from them. Their consciences spoke a different language, and caused them to dread an unknown, offended power. What an impression would the gospel make on such men! It no longer tortured them with requirements which they felt themselves unable to fulfil, but announced to them first of all the free grace and compassion of their Father in heaven, who, out of pure love, had sent his only-begotten Son into the world, and caused him to endure the greatest sufferings for their sakes, in order to free them from their misery, and to bring them as fallen children to their reconciled Father, who was willing to regard all their transgressions as if they had not been committed. The Son of God, crucified for sinners, was presented to their heavy-laden souls, who himself sinless, the Holy One, bore their sins, and was a personal manifestation of the love of a reconciled God. Now the burden was at once taken away from their hearts, all the spectres of their guilty conscience vanished before the filial confidence in God, and joy filled their inmost souls. They no longer dreaded evil spirits, for they knew that Christ had taken away their power; that no power could wrest from the hands of their Almighty Father those who were united to God through Christ: they had indeed the confident assurance that the kingdom of evil must become subject to them in the name of Jesus Christ. From this point of view the Apostle Paul combated superstition, attacking it in the stronghold, in his Epistle to the Colossians: "How can you any longer dread evil spirits, since the heavenly Father himself has redeemed you from the kingdom of darkness and translated you into the kingdom of his dear Son—since he has exalted him victoriously to heaven to share in the divine power of his Father, with which he now operates on humanity—since by his sufferings

for you he has reconciled you to the heavenly Father, has freed you from the domination of all the powers of darkness, has conquered all their attempts against his kingdom, led them in triumph, and exposed them in all their shame before the whole creation? How then can you be the slaves of a wounded conscience, since Christ has taken from the cross and destroyed the indictment which your consciences testified against you, and has won and ratified the forgiveness of all your sins?

"How can you be afraid of being defiled by earthly, transitory things; how can you entangle yourselves, by ordinances relating to such things, and attribute to them an importance for your inner life, since you are dead with Christ to all earthly things, and are risen with Christ in your inner life to heaven? Your faith must be fixed above, where Christ is at the right hand of God; your life is hid with Christ in God; you belong no more to the earth."

As the intercourse with publicans and sinners of Him who came to call sinners to repentance, was made a matter of reproach against him by hypocritical and self-righteous Pharisees, so the educated heathen regarded it as a disgrace to Christianity, that it exerted its saving influence on those who had been sunk in vice. Thus Celsus says, "Let us hear what people were called by Christ. Any sinner, or unintelligent person, or a minor, and, in a word, any miserable mortal, is received into the kingdom of God. They say that God receives the sinner, if he humbles himself on account of his unworthiness, but that he will not receive the righteous, though he has from the beginning acted virtuously." The example of this man, who, with all his acuteness and cleverness, was blind in divine things, and (what is most important to man) knew not himself, confirms the declaration that the natural man knows nothing of the spirit of God, that it is foolishness to him, because it must be spiritually discerned; that in ridiculing it he only manifests his own blindness; that his own inward being is an unknown world to a man, until the word of God, which pierces through joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, lays open the real condition of his inmost soul. Certainly, it is a truth testified by the gospel, which Celsus could not comprehend, that man must recognize himself to be a sinner,

must feel his misery, must regard his supposed wisdom, founded on a false estimate of things, as folly, and must receive the kingdom of God, to which he is called by grace, as a little child, if he would enter into it. If there were indeed a man whose whole life entirely agreed with the law, written on the conscience by the finger of God, such a man would need no Redeemer, and he would, as Celsus says, be able to behold God with joy. But a truly holy man would, least of all, be tempted to wish to be something of and by himself; his life would be a life in God, and hence grounded, in humility, in the consciousness that he was altogether, through and from God, the original source of all life and all goodness. But man, as he now is, must die to his ungodly nature, before he can attain to a life in God. Origen justly remarks against Celsus :—" We hold it to be impossible that man can from the first look up to God in a virtuous manner; for evil, first of all, makes its appearance in man." And the man who, according to the notions of Celsus, can confidently look up to God in the consciousness of his virtue, will be further from the kingdom of God than he who humbles himself on account of his sins before God; as the Lord places the publican who smote on his breast, and said, " God be merciful to me a sinner!" far higher than the Pharisee, who " thanked God that he was not as other men, extortioners, unjust, or adulterers." For all men, only one way to God is possible—the way of humility; not merely that humility which belongs to every created spirit, even the holiest and happiest, being the necessary and indispensable condition of holiness and happiness for all created spirits,—but that peculiar form of humility which suits the position of a fallen spirit, that self-humiliation before God which proceeds from the consciousness of sin and a longing after a righteousness which is available before God, and is only to be granted by himself. And very justly Origen says against Celsus,—" Sometimes the sinner who is conscious of his own sins, and who is penitent and humbled on account of them, is to be preferred to him who is reckoned less a sinner, but does not recognize himself as a sinner, and takes credit to himself for some good quality which he fancies himself to possess."

Celsus regarded the conversion of a man who had grown old in vice, as an impossibility, for he knew not " the law of

the spirit," (ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος, Rom. viii. 2,) which is more powerful than "the law in the members," (νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσί, Rom. vii. 23,) the power of God, which is mightier than the power of flesh and blood, the supernatural and transforming power of Christianity. Hence he adds to the words above quoted, "It is manifest to every one, that those who are disposed by nature to vice, and are accustomed to it, cannot be transformed by punishment, much less by mercy; for to transform nature is a matter of extreme difficulty." He utters in these words a great truth: law, fear, punishment, can only repress and check the outward overflowings of evil; they cannot produce a real amendment: it is indeed a truth, that it is a matter of extreme difficulty to transform the nature of man. But here again he is mistaken in supposing that only certain men, in whom the power of evil is manifested in palpable vices, are naturally disposed to sin, and require conversion; for selfishness, in whatever intricate windings, or under whatever specious appearances it may conceal itself, has the ascendancy in every man, until it is found to yield to the power of divine love. And this was his error, that what appeared impossible for man, he regarded as also impossible for God; he had no confidence in the divine mercy that it could effect what no severity of punishment, no power, in short, that cannot penetrate the very depths of human nature, can effect; he did not acknowledge the power of love over the heart, which can effect far more than all outward compulsion and all fear. Christianity imparted a knowledge of human nature very different from what Celsus professed. It first of all disclosed to those who surrendered themselves to it, the depths of self-knowledge, in order to reveal to them the inexhaustible riches of divine grace, by which they might find a remedy for all their maladies. It grounded the consciousness of the highest dignity on self-humiliation; and conferred on all, without distinction, however much they might be bowed down by the burden of sin, provided they were willing to accept the gift of grace, the highest of privileges, to be born of God, to become children of God, and partakers of a divine life.

"The corruption of nature," says Tertullian (*De Anima*, c. 41), "has become to man a second nature; yet so that goodness, the divine and original, that which is properly natural,

still dwells in the soul; for what is from God cannot become extinct, but only obscured. It can be obscured, because it is not God himself; it cannot become extinct, because it is from God. As the light which may be blocked up by a surrounding obstacle, continues to exist, but is not visible if the obstacle is dense, so also the good in the soul being obscured by the evil, according to its various constitutions, is either altogether inoperative, so that the light remains concealed, or it shines through where it finds liberty. There are some very bad and some very good, and yet all souls are of one race. Thus, in the worst there is something good, and in the best something bad. For God alone is without sin, and among men Christ alone, since Christ is also God. When the soul attains to faith, and is transformed in the second birth by water, and by the power from above, it sees itself, after the covering of its old corruption has been taken away, in clear light. It is received by the Holy Spirit into his communion; and the body follows the soul espoused to the Holy Spirit, as a servant given to it as a dowry, which no longer serves the soul but the Spirit."

A heathen writer of the third century, the learned physician Galen, who, like Celsus, was prejudiced against Christianity, says in his treatise respecting the diseases of the soul, comparing the education of children to the planting of trees, "The cultivator can never succeed in making the thorn bear grapes, for its nature is from the first not capable of such improvement. But if the vines, which in themselves are capable of producing such fruit, be neglected, they will produce either bad fruit or none at all." Now, on the Christian stand-point we must admit, that natural endowments and education must be combined in all mental development; but as to what concerns the *truly* moral or divine life, for which man was created, we shall find human nature everywhere estranged from it, and requiring redemption and restoration; yet no one is excluded from it, no one can be regarded as being incapable of being made a new man through the power of divine grace. From this point of view Tertullian says, "The bad tree will bring forth no good fruit if it be not grafted, and a good tree will produce bad fruit, unless it be cultivated; and the stones will become children of Abraham, if they are formed to the faith of

Abraham; and the generation of vipers will bring forth fruits for repentance, if they expel the poison of malignity. For this is the power of divine grace, which is more powerful than nature."*

Cyprian, who before his conversion took the same view as Celsus respecting the possibility of such a transformation of nature, excepting that he appears to have been better acquainted with his own nature, speaks in the following passage from his own experience:† "Receive what must be experienced before it can be understood. When I lay in dark-

* Non dabit enim arbor mala bonos fructus, si non inseratur; et bona malos dabit si non colatur; et lapides filii Abrahæ fient, si in fidem Abrahæ formentur; et genimina viperarum fructum pœnitentiæ facient, si venena malignitatis exspuerint. Hæc erit vis divinæ gratiæ, potentior utique natura.—Tertull. *de Anima*, 21.

† Accipe quod sentitur antequam discitur, nec per moras temporum longe agnitione colligitur, sed compendio gratiæ maturantis hauritur. Ego cum in tenebris atque in nocte cæca jacerem, cumque in salo jactantis sæculi nutabundus ac dubius vestigiis observantibus fluctuarem, vitæ meæ nescius, veritatis ac lucis alienus, difficile prorsus ac durum pro illis tunc moribus opinabar quod in salutem mihi divina indulgentia pollicebatur, ut quis renasci denuo posset, utque in novam vitam lavacro aquæ salutaris animatus quod prius fuerat exponeret, et corporis licet manente compage, hominem animo ac mente mutaret. Quo possibilis aiebam, est tanta conversio, ut repente ac pernicitur exuatur, quod vel genuinum situ materiæ naturalis obduruit, vel usurpatum duo senio vetustatis inolevit? Alta hæc et profunda penitus radice sederunt. Quando parsimonium discit, qui epularibus cœnis et largis dapibus assuevit, et qui pretiosa veste conspicuus in auro atque in purpura fulsit, ad plebeium se ac simplicem cultum quando deponit? Fascibus ille oblectatus et honoribus esse privatus et inglorius non potest. Hic stipatus clientium cuneis, frequentiore comitatu officiosi agminis honestatus, pœnam putat esse cum solus est. Tenacibus semper illecebris necesse est, ut solebat, vinolentia invitet, inflet superbia, iracundia inflammet, rapacitas inquietet, crudelitas stimulet, ambitio delectet, libido præcipitet. Hæc egomet sæpe mecum. Nam ut ipse quam plurimis vitæ prioris erroribus implicitus tenebar, quibus exui me posse non crederem, sic vitiis adhærentibus obsecundans eram, et desperatione meliorum malis meis veluti jam propriis ac vernaculis offavebam. Sed postquam undæ genitalis auxilio superioris ævi labe detersa, in expiatum pectus serenum ac purum desuper se lumen infudit, postquam cœlesti Spiritu hausto in novum me hominem nativitas secunda reparavit, mirum in modum protinus confirmare se dubia, patere clausa, lucere tenebrosa, facultatem dare, quod priùs difficile videbatur, geri posse, quod impossibile putabatur, ut esset agnoscere terrenum fuisse, quod prius carnaliter natum delictis obnoxium viveret, Dei esse cœpisse, quod jam Spiritus Sanctus animaret.—Cyprian. *Ep.* 1 *ad Donatum.*

ness and blind night; when I was tossed hither and thither by the billows of the world, and wandered about with an uncertain and fluctuating course, according to my habits at that time, I considered it as something difficult and hard that any one could be born again, lay aside what he was before, and although his corporeal nature remained the same, could become in soul and disposition another man. 'How,' said I, 'can there be so great a transformation, that a man should all at once lay aside what is either innate from his very organization, or through habit has become a second nature? How should a man learn frugality who has been accustomed to luxuries? How should he who has been clad in gold and purple condescend to simpler attire?' Another man, surrounded by troops of clients, regards it as a punishment to be alone. Intemperance must always, as heretofore, invite him with tenacious allurements, pride puff him up, anger influence him, ambition allure him, pleasure captivate him. Thus I have often said to myself. For as I was entangled in many errors of my former life, and did not believe that I could be freed from them, so I complied with the vices that cleaved to me, and despairing of amendment, submitted to my evil inclinations, as if they belonged to my nature. But after the stain of my former life had been taken away by the aid of regenerating water, a pure and serene light was poured into the reconciled heart; when through the Spirit received from heaven the second birth transformed me into a new man, things formerly doubtful were confirmed in a wonderful manner; what before was closed became open, and dark things were illuminated; power was given to perform what before seemed difficult, and what was thought impossible became possible; my former life, which, being of carnal origin, was spent in sin, was an earthly life; the life which now the Holy Ghost has animated, is a life from God."

Celsus might justly have reproached Christianity for its spread among the vicious, if it had attracted them by creating a false confidence in the forgiveness of their sins, and thus given support to their wickedness. Certainly, as the enemy has from the first mixed tares with the wheat, delusions falsifying the truth have at no time been wanting, even during the lives of the apostles; thus Paul found it needful to warn the Corinthian church that no one must

deceive himself by imagining that if he persisted in sin, or backslided into it, that he could inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. And thus in the second century we find such a notion of a magical forgiveness connected with baptism, by which many were made secure in their sins, and deferred their baptism as long as possible, that in the mean time they might live as catechumens more freely according to their inclinations, while they reserved this means of purification for the last extremity, in order, as they supposed, to be purified at the end of life from guilt and sin, and to attain eternal happiness. But the church opposed this delusion most strenuously by its instructions and its appointments. Tertullian, in his Treatise on Repentance, when he requires of the catechumens so to regulate their lives that they may be prepared for a worthy reception of baptism, thus writes: "How foolish, how unreasonable it is, to expect the full forgiveness of sins without repentance; it is withholding the purchase-money, and yet claiming the goods. For this price has the Lord determined to set on the forgiveness of sins. As all persons, when they sell anything, first of all examine the money that is offered for it, whether it be genuine or base coin, so we think the Lord first tries the quality of our repentance, for which he is willing to give us so great a blessing as eternal happiness. It is, indeed, easy for thee to obtain baptism surreptitiously, and to deceive the president of the church by thy protestations; but God watches over his own treasure, and will not allow it to fall into the hands of the unworthy. Is there, forsooth, one Christ for the baptised and another for the catechumens?"

But when men who seemed incorrigible were amended by Christianity, this was a most striking proof of its divine power. On this point Origen could justly make an appeal: "When we see the doctrine which Celsus calls foolish, operate as with magical power,—when we see how it brings a multitude of men at once from a life of lawless excesses to a well-regulated one, from unrighteousness to goodness, from timidity to such a strength of principle that for the sake of religion they despise death, have we not good reason for admiring the power of this doctrine?" What were the sweeping reproaches of Celsus when set against the living examples which the Christians were able to adduce? "What must we

say," said Justin Martyr to the heathen, "of the numberless multitudes of those who by this doctrine have been converted from a life of unbridled excesses? for not the righteous, not the moral, does Christ call to repentance, but the ungodly, the immoral, the unrighteous; for our heavenly Father prefers the repentance of sinners to their punishment."

As the gospel in a measure found easier entrance among notorious sinners than among the self-righteous Pharisees, so also it found easier entrance, to a degree, among the foolish of the world, but who did not think themselves wise; the spiritually destitute, who could not deceive themselves with apparent riches; the poor in spirit; than among the highly-cultivated part of society, to whom, in their imaginary wisdom, the word of the cross was foolishness. Celsus, after his usual manner, reckons it a reproach to Christianity, that "woollen-manufacturers, shoemakers, and curriers, the most uneducated and boorish men, were zealous advocates of this religion, men who could not open their mouths before the learned, and who only tried to gain over the women and children in families." Thus the gospel in that age, as in later times, when its light has shone forth afresh after being obscured by human inventions, found the readiest entrance among the working classes, men belonging to the despised people, whose essential moral necessities were not different from those of all other men, but not so stifled by an artificial training; who, because the burdens of every-day life were lightened by nothing, felt so much the more weary and heavy laden, and therefore turned to that which invited them to refreshment. When people of this class were heard speaking with enthusiasm of an Almighty God, of his compassion to sinners, of a kingdom of God, and a life of eternal happiness, all this in opposition to the aristocratic culture of the ancient world, which nothing could overcome but Christianity, (the true popular religion,) must have excited great astonishment. For the idea of a dignity belonging to man, as man, to be developed in all men (which was no other than the image of God in all men that had been obscured by sin), and founded upon the rights of human nature in all men, under all circumstances, was unknown to the times that preceded Christianity. According to the prevailing notions of antiquity, and even of the most eminent philosophers and legislators,

the pure knowledge of religion, and especially the idea of an original source of all existence (which, if not altogether wanting in the systems of Polytheism, was yet kept in the back-ground), were only the property of a few individuals distinguished by higher mental cultivation, and capable of philosophic reflection; the people were condemned to superstition in blind dependence on their enlightened leaders. And as Christianity had first established this pure freedom and equality of men, so it continued to be the only instrument of leading the people to maturity, and retaining them in it.

To this remarkable effect of Christianity the Christian apologists frequently appeal, since they were taught to value it highly from comparing it with the existing religious systems, both philosophic and popular. Thus Justin Martyr says: "Socrates excited men to strive by the exercise of reason after the knowledge of the unknown God; for he said (in the *Timæus* of Plato), 'It is not easy to find the Father and Creator of all existence, and when he is found, it is impossible to make him known to all;' but this is what our Christ has effected by his power. For no one believed Socrates so far as to die for the doctrine. But not only philosophers and learned men followed Christ, but artisans and illiterate persons, and despised honour, fear, and death; since here was the power of the incomprehensible Father, and not what could be effected by the demonstrations of human reason." Athenagoras says: "Among us you find the ignorant, artisans, and aged women, who, if they are not capable of proving the salutary influence of the Christian doctrine by words, yet can verify it in practice by the effects of the character which is formed by it." And Tertullian observes: "Every Christian artisan has found God, and points him out to thee; and, in fact, shows thee everything which is sought for in God, although Plato maintains that the Creator of the world is not easily found, and that when he is found, he can hardly be made known to all."

Yet it was not always that those who were sunk in vice were most receptive of the gospel. Often such persons hated the doctrine which denounced punishment on their evil deeds, and called them to repentance; as, on the other hand, others were led to the gospel by the moral consciousness already

awakened in them, and by their previous moral striving; whether it was that by their intercourse with Christians and acquaintance with the gospel they first learned what was requisite for a truly holy life, and knew how far their life hitherto had fallen short of the ideal of holiness, and by the dissatisfaction thus excited were led to the Physician of souls, or whether by their sincere moral striving they had already experienced the war between the law of the spirit and the law in their members, and longing after redemption from this conflict, hastened with joy to that Saviour who promised that redemption. Thus Origen says: "We can point out more of those who were converted from a life not altogether bad than of those who were addicted to gross sins."

And as Christianity adapted itself to the various standpoints of moral development, so it likewise did to the various stand-points of intellectual culture. Indeed many, precisely from their want of this, were peculiarly receptive of the light of a higher wisdom; but in others the absence of all intellectual life counteracted most strongly the influence of the gospel, and thus they were held fast in the bondage of heathen superstition. The consequence was, that although the preachers of the gospel at an early period felt compelled to seek out the poor peasants in their hovels, and country churches were formed under their own pastors, heathenism lingered the longest among the rude peasantry; hence, at a period when Christianity had been generally spread, heathenism and paganism (the *religio paganorum*) were synonymous. On the other hand, many persons were led by their previous mental cultivation to see the futility of the heathen idolatry, and that cultivation opened the way for them to the religion that can alone satisfy the intellectual necessities of man as a being capable of religion. Tertullian says,* "Christianity opened to the knowledge of the truth the eyes of men who had been led astray by false and excessive refinement."

There were many of the educated class who were prompted to occupy themselves with the study of philosophy, not by a speculative but rather by a religious interest. They wished

* Non qui (Christus) rupices et adhuc feras homines multitudine tot numinum demerendorum attonitos efficiendo ad humanitatem temperaret, quod Numa; sed qui jam expolitos, et ipsa urbanitate deceptos, in agnitionem veritatis ocuiaret.—Tertull. *Apol.* 21.

by this means to gain a satisfactory certainty of religious conviction, which the decaying popular faith could not impart. On this account they applied to the most prevalent philosophical systems of antiquity which appeared most nearly allied to religious belief. There were particularly two such systems, the Platonic and the Stoic.

But Stoicism could not meet their wants, for it gave them no pledge of full satisfaction, but required their suppression, and a denial of those deeply-implanted wishes belonging to a soul thirsting for eternal life, which pass beyond the bounds of a transitory earthly existence and strive to meet the communications of an eternal love. That comfortless resignation to the iron necessity of an inexorable fate manifested in the circle of the world's development, which required the sacrifice of all individual personal existence, could only satisfy the cold understanding, not the warm, feeling heart. Whoever had not suppressed the voice of nature in himself by the overweight of sophistical thinking could not accede to what was here demanded by the philosopher, to look forward to death in quiet resignation, without knowing anything of the future, when he was left in uncertainty whether the soul perished with the body or would still continue to live some time longer; and the final end was held out that his own personal existence, like every man's, and that of the gods themselves, would be absorbed in the one universal spirit from which everything which formed life proceeded, again to be swallowed up and destroyed.

There is great beauty in the remarks of St. Augustin on that stand-point of an apathy formed by the suppression of the natural feelings and cravings.* "It makes a great difference whether the insensibility proceed from health or from numbness; for in this state of mortality a sound body suffers pain if it be pricked, and so it is with the soul that possesses a sound constitution for this life. But the body

* Interest ergo utrum aliquid sanitate, an stupore non doleat. Nam secundum sanitatem hujus mortalitatis sana caro cum pungitur dolet. Qualis est et animus secundum istam vitam bene affectus, qui compunctus laborantis miseria, condolescit misericordia. Caro autem graviore morbo stupida, vel amisso etiam spiritu mortua, nec cum pungitur dolet; qualis est istorum animus, qui sine Deo philosophantur, vel potius præfocantur. —Aug. *Serm.* 348. (Ben. v, p. 1344.)

benumbed by severe illness, or dead and forsaken by the breath, feels no pain even when pricked. So it is with the souls of those who philosophize without God." And in another passage he says, "Health has no feeling of sickness, but yet it feels pain when it is wounded. But stupidity feels no pain; it has lost the feeling of pain; and the more insensible, so much the worse. Again, immortality has no room for pain; for all that was transitory has passed away, and the corruptible has put on incorruption, 1 Cor. xv. 53. There is no pain, therefore, to the immortal—no pain to the insensible body. Let not the insensible fancy that it is already immortal. The healthfulness of those that feel pain is nearer immortality than the insensibility of those that do not feel it. So thou findest a man full of pride, who persuades himself that nothing is to be feared. Dost thou hold such an one to be stronger than he who said, 'without were fightings, and within were fears?' (2 Cor. vii. 5); or stronger than our Lord himself, who said, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death?' He is not stronger; rejoice not in that insensibility. Such an one has not put *on* immortality, but put *off* feeling. Wish not to have a passionless soul, but say in the feeling of health, 'Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?' (2 Cor. xi. 29.) If he had not been so moved by the offence of that weak brother, would he have been better because destitute of feeling and pain? Away with this! It would be insensibility, not true rest. For when we reach our heavenly fatherland, where our souls will find full security, there they will be filled with rest and eternal blessedness; there will be no pain, and no cause of pain."

The influence of the Platonic philosophy on the religious life was far deeper and more widely felt. This formed then, as it has done in later times, for many persons, a transition-point from unbelief to belief in Christianity. By means of it an ardent longing was awakened, but which, not having a distinct conception of its proper object and aim, fluctuated with unsteady restlessness. When in sadness of heart the self-questioner exclaimed, "What is the drop of my existence in the boundless ocean of the infinite! what is man that God should be mindful of him!" this philosophy gave no consolatory answer; to the wish that would fain believe,

it gave no firm anchor for connection with heaven, no elevating power to soar to the super-mundane. True, it led man to the consciousness of possessing an intellectual and moral nature, rising above time and allied to the divine; but it could not give birth to an undoubting consciousness of a personal existence, maturing into a state of moral perfection, and the enjoyment of untroubled blessedness. All that it gave was the doctrine of a soul, in its nature exalted above change and dissolution, changing the form of manifesting its existence without the recollection of its earlier states,—the doctrine that souls which, in this temporal life, had attained a certain stage of virtue and wisdom, after their separation from the body would be exalted for a very long period to a divine supersensual life, in order, after the lapse of this long period, again to be reduced by the power of fate to union with an earthly body. By such a doctrine no satisfaction could be administered to natures more practical than speculative. The needs of most men required a certain firm support of faith, an anchor which would enter into the invisible sanctuary which the soul, in virtue of its destiny for heaven, and its nature, originally allied to the divine though estranged from God by sin, felt compelled to seek. How powerfully these needs pressed upon men in that age, is testified by the memorable words of the heathen philosopher, in the third century, who used every effort, in order, by the Hellenic religion as artificially revived by a mystical Platonism, to satisfy these needs in a deceptive manner, and by this deception to keep men at a distance from Christianity, towards which they were impelled by the urgency of these needs. In his introduction to his collection (formed with this design) of the heathen oracles (both genuine and spurious), Porphyry says: "The uses of this collection will be best known by those who, longing after the truth, have previously prayed that a divine manifestation might be granted to them, in order that they might attain repose from their doubts, by instruction endowed with trustworthy authority."

This want of the religious principle so strongly felt by many, and yet unsatisfied, procured for persons who boasted of a connexion with the invisible world, and certain higher powers communicated to them, a ready introduction, and great influence in those times. Many individuals, who could

attain no firm and satisfactory convictions by means of the contending systems of the philosophers, and the powers of their own reason, sought for communications from the invisible world by means of necromancers and the conductors of awful mysteries. In a fictitious narrative, which was perhaps a production of the second century, we find a vivid delineation of the inquiring minds of that age, which certainly was drawn from the life. Let us listen how a distinguished Roman of the apostolic age, Clement, afterwards bishop of Rome, here represents the history of his inner life: "I, Clement, was able to pass my first years in a moral course, since the thoughts that followed me from childhood called me off from pleasure to sorrow and exertion; for there dwelt in me, I know not whence it came, the thoughts which reminded me frequently of death, that after death I should not be, and then no one would think of me, for eternity would involve all things in oblivion. When did the world begin, and what was there before the world? Was it from eternity? Then it would last to eternity. If it was brought into existence, then also it would at some time perish. And what would be again after its dissolution, unless perhaps the stillness of death and oblivion (that comfortless idea which is found in several of the oriental systems of religion, that the changing forms of individual existence will at last be dissolved into an unconscious *All*—thus universal death will be the ultimate result—all existence will become an unreal spectre), and perhaps something may then be which now I cannot conceive of.

"Lost incessantly in these and similar thoughts, I knew not whence, I so tortured myself, that I became pale and emaciated. And what was more dreadful than all, when I longed to throw off this anxiety from me as useless, my sufferings became more intense. I was indignant at this, not being aware that the thoughts that filled my mind, would be a blessed guide to a happy immortality, as I afterwards found by experience, for which I thank the Almighty; for through those thoughts which at first tortured me, I was compelled to seek for the truth, and at last succeeded in finding it, and when I had found it I pitied those whom before I had ignorantly pronounced fortunate.

"As from childhood I had been occupied with such

thoughts, I visited the school of the philosophers, in order to attain some certain knowledge, and found there nothing but the building up and pulling down of systems, a confused strife of opinions. For example, sometimes the opinion triumphed, that the soul was immortal, at other times that it was mortal. In the first instance I rejoiced, in the second I was troubled, and at last nothing fixed remained in my soul. When I perceived that things did not appear as they really were, but as were represented by men, my mental confusion was worse than ever. I sighed from the depths of my soul, for I could gain nothing fixed, and yet I could not free myself from their speculations, although I wished, as I said before; for though I often imposed silence on myself, yet I knew not how it came to pass that such thoughts again found their way into my mind, and I felt pleasure in them.

"Involved in fresh doubt, I asked myself why I troubled myself in vain, since the matter was clear. If after death I shall cease to be, I need not trouble myself about it while I live. I will rather defer my anxiety for that time when I shall cease to be, and therefore be unable to feel anxious. And then another thought intruded, for I said to myself,—'Perhaps I shall suffer then something worse than my present anxiety, in case I have not led a pious life, and if, according to the doctrine of some philosophers, I am delivered to eternal punishment!' I then rejoined,—'But it is not so;' and then again I said,—'But if it should be so?' Since, therefore, the matter is uncertain, it is the surest way for me to lead a pious life. And looking at an uncertain hope, how shall I be able, in order to will what is good, to conquer the sensual desires? Nor have I a confident conviction what is good and well-pleasing to God. I know not whether the soul be mortal or immortal; I can find no certain doctrine, and yet cannot rest satisfied with such thoughts.

"What must I do now? I will travel into Egypt to make friends with the Hierophants and Prophets of the Mysteries; I will seek out a magician, and when I have found one, I will induce him by a large sum of money to raise a spirit for me, as if I wished to question him respecting some worldly matter; but my question shall relate to the immortality of the soul. I shall not wait for the answer of the spirit, but his look, his appearance, will be to me a

sufficient proof, and uncertain words cannot overthrow what I experience by actual eyesight. But when I stated my intention to a philosopher of my acquaintance, he suggested many reasons why I should not venture to execute it. 'For,' said he, 'if the spirit will not obey the call of the magician, you will live in constant terror for having broken the laws which forbid the practice of magic. But if the spirit complies with the call, then, along with distress of conscience, you will have no more satisfaction in the things of religion, having been so daring; for the Divinity must be displeased with those who disturb the souls of the departed.'

"Having heard this, I was no longer desirous to make the experiment, but yet did not abandon my earlier resolution; I was only grieved to see myself prevented from carrying it into effect."

In this state of seeking, wishing, doubting, and wavering, Clement found himself, when he heard of the Son of God appearing in Palestine, who promised eternal happiness to all who believed on him, and regulated their lives by his teaching, and confirmed his declarations by undoubted acts of divine power. And hence he became acquainted with the gospel, and found in it the rest he had sought for.

In this representation of Clement's inner life, even if fictitious, we see the course of the inner life of many persons in that age; perhaps we may find in it a mirror for our own times.

Thus Justin Martyr, after he had sought satisfaction in many philosophic systems, and last of all in the Platonic, which most strongly attracted him, was brought at last to Christianity. He says of himself, after he had become a Christian instead of a heathen philosopher: "I found first in Christianity the only certain and salutary philosophy. Gladly would I impart to all the same disposition which I now possess, not to forsake the instructions of the Saviour; for these instructions have in them something worthy of veneration, a power to shame those who have wandered from the right way, while they furnish the most delightful refreshment to those who practise them." (*Dialog. c. Tryph.* § 8.) Speaking from his own experience, he calls Christ the glorious rock from which living water flows into the hearts of those who through him love the Father of all, and which he gives

to those who desire to drink the water of life. Elsewhere he speaks of "the word of truth and of wisdom, burning and shining brighter than the sun, penetrating and shining into the depths of the heart and soul."

Thus Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria in the third century, a man distinguished for pious zeal and philosophic knowledge, was brought to Christianity by the examination of various systems. The examination and trial of all things was, as he says, the way of faith for him. In the system of many Christian theosophists in the east (Gnostics), which had been formed from a combination of Christian ideas with existing oriental modes of thought, evident traces may be found that these eminent men had examined with an anxiety stretching beyond the bounds of humanity the mysterious fragments of religious systems that belonged to a venerable antiquity, until they were attracted by the surpassing splendour of the revelation of God in the gospel. And although they penetrated into Christianity only on that one side, according to which their whole intellectual life had been regulated, although they did not possess the self-denial to sacrifice or subordinate their former views and mental tendencies to the all-transforming creation which Christianity necessarily produces where it fully operates, yet we here see in a remarkable manner the mighty influence of Christianity on opposite tendencies of human nature; both on that giant (so to speak) mental tendency, striving upwards and despising as too narrow the common conceptions of human nature, wishing to penetrate far beyond into the depths of the hidden God, and on the other hand on that tendency cleaving to the earth, drawing down the heavenly to earth, and mingling it with the earthly; on both these opposite modes of speculation it was able to exert an overpowering and attractive force.

CHAPTER II.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON THE UNIVERSAL RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE IN MAN.

CHRISTIANITY in its operations connected itself with the existing consciousness of God, which it awoke from a dormant state, and released from its fetters, while it converted the dim apprehension of the existence of a hidden God into the clear and living consciousness of a God revealed in Christ. The idea of an originator and source of all existence, "in whom we live and move and have our being, whose offspring we are, and who is not far from any one of us;"—this idea is deeply founded in the intellectual and moral nature of man; but as long as it remains nothing more than an obscure sentiment in the back-ground of human consciousness, and does not pervade the whole life as a vital principle, and mould the whole life in conformity to it, it is absolutely barren, and by contact with the world which rules the consciousness of men, it is perpetually kept under, and degenerates into an idolatry of Nature. It was of no use that reflective men possessed the abstract knowledge of the highest Unity; this could not, as the ancient philosophers and lawgivers clearly perceived, be brought down to the popular mind, and infused into it as a practical principle of action. It was not by a traditionary abstract knowledge of God, but only by the life of every individual being brought into personal relation, not to a hidden deity dimly apprehended, but to a God made known in his living revelation, and immediately laying hold of human nature; only by such means could heathenism be completely vanquished. In the various and peculiar modes by which the converted heathens expressed the relation of that knowledge of God which filled and penetrated their whole souls to their former habits of thinking, we may again recognise the diversity of those tendencies and ways out of which they were brought to Christianity.

To a question commonly put to Christians by heathens sunk in sensuality, "Who then is the God whom ye honour in secret without any visible cultus, without images, or temples,

or altars?" Theophilus of Antioch replied: "It is that Being whose breath animates all things; if he were to withdraw his breath, all would sink to nothing. Thou canst not speak without testifying of him; of him the breath of thy life testifies, and yet thou knowest him not. This ignorance is owing to the blindness of thy soul, the hardness of thy heart.* God is seen by those who are able to see him as soon as they have the eye of their souls open. All have eyes, but some eyes are darkened, and do not behold the light of the sun, and when the blind do not see, it does not follow that there is no sunshine: the blind must accuse themselves and their own eyes. So also, oh man! the eyes of the soul are darkened by sin. Man must have a pure soul like a clear mirror. When sin is in man, like rust on a metal mirror, he cannot see God. But if thou art willing, thou canst be cured. Give thyself to the Physician, and he will open the eyes of thy soul and of thy heart. Who is the Physician? God who heals and makes alive by his words." Thus Theophilus points out to the heathen, that man by his estrangement from God, in consequence of his internal corruption, is prevented from understanding that revelation of God which is presented by the whole creation (Rom. i. 18, 20), and therefore he must first seek to be freed from this corruption in order that the image of a holy God may be reflected in a sanctified heart. He very properly refers to his own experience when he passed from heathenism to Christianity, and shows that the true knowledge of God is not to be communicated to men as something abstract, by certain ideas from without, but must proceed in a living manner by a regeneration of the inner life.

Men, who before their conversion to Christianity, had

* Βλέπεται γὰρ θεὸς τοῖς δυναμένοις αὐτὸν ὁρᾶν, ἐπὰν ἔχωσι τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀνεωγμένους τῆς ψυχῆς. Πάντες μὲν γὰρ ἔχουσι τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς, ἀλλὰ ἔνιοι ὑποκεχυμένους, καὶ μὴ βλέποντας τὸ φῶς τοῦ ἡλίου· καὶ οὐ παρὰ τὸ μὴ βλέπειν τοὺς τυφλούς, ἤδη καὶ οὐκ ἔτι τὸ φῶς τοῦ ἡλίον φαῖνον· αλλα ἑαυτοὺς αἰτιάσθωσαν οἱ τυφλοὶ, καὶ τοὺς ἑαυτῶν ὀφθαλμούς. Οὕτω καὶ σὺ, ὦ ἄνθρωπε, ἔχεις ἀποκεχυμένους τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς ψυχῆς σου ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων καὶ τῶν πράξεῶν σου τῶν πονηρων. Ὥσπερ ἐσοπτρον ἐστίλβωμένον, οὕτω δεῖ τον ἄνθρωπον ἔχειν καθαρὰν ψυχήν. Ἐπὰν οὖν ᾖ ὡς ἐν τῷ ἐσόπτρῳ, οὐ δύναται ὁρᾶσθαι τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ ἄνθρώπου ἐν τῳ ἐσόπτρῳ. Οὕτω καὶ ὅταν ἡ ἁμαρτία εν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, οὐ δύναται ὁ τοιοῦτος ἄνθρωπος θεωρεῖν τὸν θεόν.—Theoph. Antioch. *ad Autolycum*, 2.

examined the various systems of the ancient philosophers, now recollected with pleasure those pure religious ideas which rose above the popular superstition, and proceeded from the religious consciousness as developed by philosophy. From the central point of Christianity they could now recognise what bore an affinity to it in all the scattered traces of truth, and separated them from the falsehood with which they were mixed. As Clement of Alexandria expresses himself, "They bound together the portions of truth separated by human error into one harmonious whole, and thus recognised the truth without danger."

Yet certainly there was some truth at the foundation, when Tertullian, a man of practical life rather than a philosopher, was disposed to see in all mental culture (what can be only affirmed of what was not true), a falsifier of the original truth, a corruption of nature; and hence, instead of going to the schools of the philosophers, in which he often found the voice of Nature suppressed, he rather appealed to the involuntary utterance of this voice in the unguarded expressions of spontaneous feeling by simple uneducated men. He wished to show that even the predominance of delusion could not altogether suppress the original consciousness of God. "I summon thee, oh soul!" he says, "not such as when, trained in the schools, exercised in libraries, nourished in the academies and porches of Athens, thou utterest thy crude wisdom. I address thee as simple and rude, unpolished and unlearned, such as they have thee who have only thee; the very and entire thing that thou art in the road, in the highway, in the weaver's factory. I have need of thy inexperience, since in thy experience, however small, no one puts faith. I demand of thee those truths which thou bringest with thyself to man, which thou hast learnt to know either from thyself, or from the author of thy being . . . . We hear thee saying openly and with full liberty, not allowed to us, both at home and abroad, '*Which God grant*,' and '*If God will*.' By this language thou testifiest the being of a God; thou ascribest all power to him, to whose will thou makest reference; thou deniest also the being of other gods, since thou callest these by their particular names. Also what we say of the nature of God is not hidden from thee; it is thy language, '*The good God*,' '*God gives what is good*.' In fact, thou addest, '*but man is evil*.'

Thou indicatest by this contrast, that man is evil, because he has estranged himself from the good God. Also in what we regard as the holiest foundation of doctrine and practice, in the belief that God alone is the source of good for man, we agree. Thou sayest, '*God bless thee*' as easily as it is necessary for a Christian to say it. '*God sees all things;*' '*I commend the matter to God.*' '*God will recompense it;*' '*God will judge between us.*' Whence these expressions of those who are not Christians; yes, even while they are worshipping false gods." He calls these expressions of the soul conscious of God, "the doctrine of original nature, intrusted in silence to the innate consciousness." "What wonder," he says, "if being derived from God, it expresses the same truths which God has communicated to his own people." In his apology he calls these involuntary expressions of mankind "the witness of the soul which is Christian by nature." (*Testimonium animæ naturaliter Christianæ.*) And in pronouncing these words he says, "It looks not to the capitol, but to heaven, for it knows the dwelling-place of the living God; from him and thence it descended. Although shut up in the prison of the body, although taken captive by bad instruction, although enervated by lusts and pleasures, although the slave of false gods, yet when it comes to its senses as out of a fit, a sleep, or an illness, and attains a feeling of soundness, it names God with that name only which is peculiar to the true God."

While Tertullian justly acknowledged in Christianity the revelation of that God who is never wholly hidden, is never altogether wanting to man, who always lets himself be recognised and perceived, to whom our whole being bears witness, and in whom it rests, who need not be proved to exist since he is proved by the fact that he cannot be denied;—on the other hand the warm heart of Marcion was so captivated by the glory of the revelation of God in Christ, that he exclaimed: "The God of holiness and love, whom I find in the gospel, was hitherto wholly strange to the world; neither Nature nor Reason could point to him; the God whom Nature and Reason announced. Is not the most high God revealed in Christ? In the limited weak nature of man there is nothing akin to this Almighty One, the God of holy love; Christianity has first communicated to man a divine life, flowing from this God, by which he is raised above the whole finite creation to

communion with this infinite Being of holiness and love." Although truth and falsehood are here mingled, yet we perceive from it how extraordinary and new the knowledge of God which Christianity communicated to men, and its operation on humanity, appeared to the mind of a heathen deeply impressed by the power of the gospel; how he, when he compared the world to which Christianity had transported him, with the world in which he had lived before, which was all around him, and presented itself to his view in antiquity, could not believe in the possibility of any common bond between these two worlds.

We learn from these examples how easily a partial apprehension of truth, combined with deep religious feeling, leads into error; how easily, when a revolution takes place in deeply-seated feelings, error mingles with truth. And when we compare these two men, who resembled one another in ardent love and violent antipathy, and both deeply penetrated by Christianity, we perceive how easily it happens that those persons who, if they look into the recesses of each other's hearts, would embrace one another as brethren, conduct themselves as strangers, and even as enemies, because their dispositions are manifested only through the enigmatical medium of language and the imperfect vehicle of notions.

CHAPTER III.

THE RELATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TO THE HEATHEN WORLD.

A RELIGION destined to satisfy the constant and ever-abiding religious wants of human nature, and hence suited for men under every variety of circumstances, and elevated above all earthly forms of mental culture; the idea of such a religion of humanity was totally unknown to antiquity. And though to every one who knows what religion is, and who is aware that no other power can compensate for its absence, it must be evident that the religious sentiment, in itself, must be the same in the learned and the unlearned, the

civilized and the uncivilized; still, since either the essential in religion is confounded with what is only deducible from it, or something quite different is substituted in the place of religion, the error is ever renewed, that religion must be different according to the various stages of mental culture.

Celsus, the opponent of Christianity, says: "He must be void of understanding who can believe that Greeks and barbarians, in Asia, Europe, and Libya, all nations to the ends of the earth, can unite in the reception of one and the same religious doctrine." All the ancient religions were national and state religions, and this was especially the case with the Romans, among whom the political point of view predominated in everything, not excepting religion. The public apostacy of citizens from the state religion, and the introduction of a foreign religion, or a new one not legalized by the state (*religio illicita*), appeared as an act of high treason. In this light was regarded the conversion of Roman citizens or subjects to Christianity. "Your religion is illegal" (*non licet esse vos*), was the reproach commonly cast on Christians, without referring to the contents of their religion; to this was added the striking difference between Christianity and all that had hitherto been denominated religion. Thus it was said to Christians, "While all other religions are as so many sanctuaries for distinct nations handed down from a venerable antiquity, on the contrary, your religion existed from the first with disturbance; it was a revolt against the religion of the Hebrews, which was venerable for its antiquity, though blameworthy for its intolerance; that was its origin, and now it threatens to overturn everywhere the established sanctuaries, and the order of things confirmed by sacred customs and usages. Only see how your religion is distinguished from everything which has hitherto received the name; no temple, no altar, no image, no sacrifice! How can such a religion, which presents nothing for the senses, suit men living in a world of sense, and though a purely spiritual religion may be adapted for a few philosophers, how can it be so for the rude, unreasoning people?" The positivism which was zealous for what was established, and the prejudice in favour of ancient tradition which condemned everything new from the first as false, were opposed to the power which threatened to unhinge the whole ancient world. Accusations and reasons such as in later times have been urged by the

Romish Church against Protestantism, were then brought forward from the stand-point of heathenism against Christianity. The multitude of sects opposed to one another which had arisen from the fermentation caused by Christianity in the human mind was adduced as a proof, that mankind, having once lost their respect for ancient tradition, would become a prey to the caprice of contending opinions, and on this the hope was founded that Christianity would perish in the warfare of opinion, and Christians themselves destroy one another. And yet the multitude of various heresies at this time bears witness to the power with which Christianity, condescending, as it did, to the lowest, and rising to the highest, could attract minds of the most different structure, each in its own way; for it was because men of the most opposite stand-points could not withstand the attractive power of Christianity, and yet were too much entangled in their respective stand-points to surrender themselves without reserve to the Divine, that this multitude of heresies arose. Clement of Alexandria, in order to remove this stigma, appeals to what our Lord himself had prophetically uttered, in his parable of the wheat and the tares, and alleges as the general cause, that everywhere the bad follows the good; according to the significant old German proverb, 'Wherever God has a temple, the devil builds a chapel near it;' or as Agricola expresses it a little differently in his collection of German proverbs, 'Wherever our Lord God builds a church, the devil sets up an ale-house.' He also quotes the words ascribed to our Lord by an ancient tradition, in which he enjoins his disciples to be skilful money-changers, and learn to distinguish between genuine and base coin. "On account of heresies," he says,* "men must submit to

* Ἐπαποδυτέον ἄρα τῷ πόνῳ τῆς εὑρέσεως διὰ τὰς αἱρέσεις, ἀλλ' οὐ τέλεον ἀποστατέον· οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁπώσας παρακείμενης, τῆς μὲν ἀληθοῦς καὶ ὡρίμου, τῆς δὲ ἐκ κηροῦ ὡς ὅτι μάλιστα ἐμφεροῦς πεποιημένης, διὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα ἀμφοῖν ἀφεκτέον· διακριτέον δὲ ὁμοῦ τε τῇ καταληπτικῇ θεωρίᾳ, καὶ τῷ κυριωτάτῳ λογισμῷ το ἀληθὲς ἀπὸ του φαινομένου. Καὶ ὥσπερ ὁδοῦ μιᾶς μὲν τῆς βασιλικῆς τυγχανούσης, πολλῶν δὲ καὶ ἄλλων, τῶν μὲν ἐπι τινα κρημνὸν, τῶν δὲ ἐπὶ ποταμὸν ῥοώδη ἢ θαλασσαν ἀγχιβαθῆ φερουσῶν, οὐκ ἄν τις ὀκνήσαι διὰ τὴν διαφωνίαν ὁδεῦσαι, χρήσαιτο ὁ' ἂν τῇ ἀκινδύνῳ καὶ βασιλικῇ καὶ λεωφορῳ· οὕτως ἄλλα ἄλλων περὶ ἀληθείας λεγόντων, οὐκ ἀποστατέον, ἐπιμελέστερον δὲ θηρατέον τὴν ἀκριβεστάτην περὶ αὐτῆς γνῶσιν.—Clem. Alexand. *Strom.* vii. 754. (Pott. 888.)

the labour of investigating, but not altogether reject Christianity; for if natural and ripe fruit and also an imitation of it in wax lie side by side, we must not on account of the resemblance abstain from both kinds of fruit, but must seek to distinguish the real from the apparent by trial. And if there is one high-road, but many other bye-paths, of which one may lead to a precipice, another to a rapid stream, or to the deep sea, no one on account of this diversity will be afraid to travel, but every one will make use of the safe high-road; so we must not desert the truth, because one says this, and another that, respecting it, but must be so much the more careful in gaining the exact knowledge of it." Thus he requires all to examine the Scriptures for themselves, in order to learn the true doctrine of Christ. The manner also in which Christianity, which, though threatened to be torn in pieces by these manifold contrarieties, was able in the issue to overcome them all, and to make them serve for the glorification of the truth which was developed with greater clearness and fulness than ever, was a proof of the divine power that dwelt in this religion; and the result of this conflict may serve to strengthen faith in reference to the renewal of it in all future ages.

As Christianity brought into consciousness the same image of God in all men, set free the development of humanity from the narrow boundaries of the state, subordinating all to the same level, and destroyed the ancient stand-point of state religion, so also ideas of religious freedom and the rights of conscience, which were unknown to the ancient world, were first diffused abroad by Christianity. The Christian apologists were the first who testified of these new ideas brought to light by Christianity. "It is," says Tertullian to the Roman Proconsul Scapula, "one of the rights of man, and belongs to the natural freedom of every one, to worship according to his convictions, and the religion of one can neither injure nor profit others. But it is not religion to employ force in religion; for religion must be voluntary, and received without compulsion. Sacrifices are desired only from free hearts. If you force us to sacrifice you will give nothing to your gods, for they will not desire any forced sacrifices."

There were magistrates or persons in authority who were themselves free from fanatical hatred of the Christians, and

unwillingly put in execution the laws against them. They even told the Christians that they might perform the outward ceremonies of the state religion as the laws required, but assuredly might believe in their hearts what they liked; that the law only commanded the outward act, which in itself was a matter of indifference. We recognize in such suggestions a characteristic of the stand-point of a state religion degrading to a mere compulsory mechanism the most solemn act, which ought to be only an expression of free individual conviction. This stand-point was completely foreign to Christians. The words of our Saviour were deeply impressed on their hearts which were addressed to them before their baptism, and often quoted by their bishops in their public discourses: "Whoso shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father in heaven; but whoso denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father in heaven." Many Roman magistrates in the provinces, to whom gain was a greater object than the proper discharge of their office, offered for a certain sum of money to grant individual Christians a certificate (*libellum*) that they had performed the heathen religious ceremonies according to the law, and thus to free them from any further molestation; but to accept toleration on these terms was repudiated by the church as a denial of the faith.

But the Roman statesmen desired only a blind obedience; they knew not how to understand the enthusiasm with which the Christians would rather surrender their earthly life than do anything against their consciences; nor could they respect the rights of that which in its nature must be the freest thing in man—the religious convictions of the individual. In this firmness of the Christians they saw nothing but blind fanaticism, criminal disobedience, and self-will. Indeed, in an age enervated by despotism, men who met death and excruciating tortures with composure, rather than utter a few words, or perform some ceremonies, must have appeared very strange and suspicious. "Such hardihood of soul," it might be said, "suited the heroic times of the ancient republic, but not this age of peace and refined sensibility."

In their conduct towards the government and the laws, the Christians distinguished themselves in contrast with the immoral practices which had gained ground in the times of

despotism. In a time when the inclination of self-interest to evade the laws in secret was combined with the timorousness of a slavish spirit, the Christians set the example of the conscientious observance of the laws for God's sake, and of unbending mental freedom, which, as it only obeyed the rulers of the world as placed in their office by God, so no power on earth could force to obey when anything was required that contradicted the divine laws. As to the first point, Tertullian could attest that what the State lost by the decrease of idolatry in the revenues of the temples, was amply compensated by the conscientious exactness with which the Christians paid the taxes and customs. As to the second point, since they only obeyed God in obeying men, nothing could induce them to obey men rather than God, which is the true freedom of those who wish to be only the servants of God. Nothing could prevail upon them to pay an honour to the emperors, which the idolatrous flattery of the heathen had invented, to swear by the genius of Cæsar, to sacrifice or scatter incense to their images, or to take a part in the noisy, extravagant, and often unseemly public demonstrations of joy and diversions in honour of the emperors on their birthdays or anniversaries of their accession to the throne. On this account it was complained, without considering the reasons of their conduct, that the Christians violated the reverence due to the emperors, and they were called enemies of the State and of the emperor. "We," says Tertullian, vindicating the Christians from this charge, "we pray for the emperor's welfare to the eternal, true, and living God, whom even the emperors themselves would rather have propitious to them than all the rest. They know who has given them dominion; they know, as men, who has given them life. They feel that he is God alone, in whose power alone they stand, to whom they are second, after whom they are first, before all gods. And why not, since they are above all men? They reflect how far the powers of their empire extend, and thus they understand God; they acknowledge that they prevail through Him, against whom they cannot prevail. To Him we Christians look up with outspread, because innocent, hands; with bare heads, because we are not ashamed; finally, without a prompter, because we pray from the heart. We pray always for all emperors that they may have a long

life, a secure government, a safe home, valiant armies, a faithful senate, a righteous people, a world at peace, and all that man or emperor can wish for. These things I cannot ask of any other being than of Him from whom I know I shall obtain them, since it is He who alone supplies them, and it is I to whom the obtaining of them is due—I, his servant, who reverence Him alone, who surrender my life for his law, who offer Him a rich and larger victim which He himself has commanded, the prayer proceeding from a chaste body, an innocent soul, from the Holy Spirit; not a mere grain of incense of the value of an *as*, leaves of an Arabian tree, not two drops of wine, nor the blood of a diseased beast that longs to die, and after all these foul things, an impure conscience; so that I marvel when the victims are examined before you by the most wicked priests why the hearts of the beasts rather than of the sacrificers themselves are examined." And afterwards he says, "I will call the emperor lord, but only when I am not compelled to call him lord instead of God. Otherwise I am free before him; for I have only one Lord, the almighty and eternal God—the same who is his Lord also. He who is the father of his country, how can he be its lord?"

But though Christians were agreed in the principle to obey men only for God's sake, and to obey God rather than man, yet varieties of opinion arose in the application of this principle. Here a question of importance relative to Christian morals was raised, which even in later times has been often agitated, and is still. Christianity, since it is designed to be the salt and leaven for all human things, must certainly enter into all human relations, and yet it must oppose everything that is sinful in them, agreeably to our Lord's declaration, "I am not come to send peace, but a sword." But the point to be determined is, where is the line to be drawn between being at "peace with all men as much as lieth in us," and wielding the sword against the world defiled with sin, both which are duties belonging to the Christian calling. There is danger of failure on either hand; either by a false accommodation to the world, or by a false opposition against it. To avoid falling into one or other of these errors must have been extremely difficult in that age. All the civil and domestic relations, and all customs, were penetrated by the ancient

popular religion; but this connection had been long forgotten in many forms of life, so that only learned antiquaries were aware of it. And now the question arose, How can what belongs to civil, social and domestic life, in the prevailing institutions and customs, be separated from its reference to to the heathenish element? What is there in itself indifferent, with which the Christian ought to comply in discharging his duty as a citizen, or for the preservation of civil order and tranquillity? These questions were answered in different ways by a sterner and a milder party, and on both sides the due mean was sometimes overstepped. As the first glowing zeal of the new converts would readily carry them away into a violent opposition to the world, so a too violent opposition against everything which appeared in any way connected with heathenism might easily be excited at this time in earnest dispositions. Even in those who fell into this error, we cannot refuse our homage to their noble-minded zeal and deep Christian earnestness; we feel attracted by their elevation of soul, their warmth of heart. Thus Tertullian, a representative of the sterner tendency, said to those who seemed to him to make too lax an application of Christ's words, "Give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's:" "The Lord required that the tribute-money should be shown him, and asked concerning the image whose it was: and when told that it was Cæsar's, he said, 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's;' that is, Render to Cæsar the image of Cæsar which is on the coin, and to God the image of God which is in man; so that unto Cæsar thou givest money, unto God thou givest thyself; for if all things are Cæsar's, what will be left for God?" Here we may quote the beautiful words of Clement of Alexandria: "The purified, righteous man has become a coin of the Lord, and has the impress of his king stamped upon him." As Tertullian believed that he saw something heathenish in the practice of illuminating the houses on occasion of the feasts in honour of the emperors, he said to those Christians who without scruple fell into the general custom: "Let those, therefore, who have no light, light their lamps daily. Thou art a light of the world, and a tree that ever flourisheth. If thou hast renounced the temples, make not thy own gate a temple."

Under the imperial government, all secret combinations or societies were regarded with suspicion, as it was feared that they had political objects in view. Now the intimate cordial union, the brotherly love and sympathy among Christians in all parts, could not escape observation. But the Roman magistracy and their political agents could form no conception of that bond of invisible communion which held their hearts together. They suspected worldly objects, and causes of combination. "No sooner do Christians meet," it was said, "than they recognize one another by certain signs, as members of a secret confederation for concealed objects, and are united to one another like brethren. At their love-feasts (*agapæ*), they pledge themselves by awful oaths and symbolic rites." Tertullian, in reply to this imputation, says* (*Apology*, ch. 38), "We who are indifferent to glory and fame have no need of secret combinations; nothing is more foreign to our taste than politics; we know only one commonwealth for all mankind, that is, the world."

While some persons imputed secret political designs to the Christians, others on the other hand complained of their retired, joyless, gloomy manner of life, and their apathy about public affairs. They were struck with the conduct of Christians in standing aloof from all public, noisy diversions; it was remarked that they were never to be seen at the theatres and gladiatorial shows; they prayed and fasted, and conversed more about the life to come than the present. Thus they came to be looked upon as useless creatures in social life, men who shunned the broad daylight, dumb when they appeared in public, but loquacious enough when they met one another in private.

Certainly the contrariety of Christianity when it first appeared to the existing world was in many points so absolute, that many persons, as we have already remarked, might be impelled to a rigid withdrawal from those forms of worldly life to which Christianity could well adapt itself. But nothing excepting the genuine Christian stand-point could enable a person to distinguish between the true and the false on this question. From the stand-point of heathen worldliness,

* At enim nobis ab omni gloria et dignitate ardore frigentibus nulla est necessitas cœtus, nec ulla magis res aliena quam publica. Unam omnium rempublicam agnoscemus mundum.—Tertull. *Apol.* 38.

Christianity itself must have appeared as an erroneous opposition to the world, as an outrageous, repulsive tendency in assuming the supervision of human life; in short, as a religious extravagance. Christians of the stricter class, when they kept aloof from those diversions which were inconsistent with Christian principles and habits, were told that "such gratifications for the eye and ear could not injure the religion of the heart. God would not be offended by those indulgences which men might enjoy in the right time and place without detriment to religion. They were the gifts of God which furnished mankind with these pleasures." (See Tertullian's treatise *De Spectaculis*.)

But Tertullian says, in vindication of the Christians, in answer to the reproach cast upon them for rendering life useless by their contempt of the world: "We are said to be unprofitable in the common concerns of life. How can this be said of men who live with you, have the same food, dress and furniture, the same wants of daily life? For we are not Brachmans, nor the gymnosophists of India, dwelling in the woods, and exiles from life. We remember our obligations to God our Lord and Creator; we reject no enjoyment of his works: certainly we refrain from using them immoderately or wrongfully. Wherefore we live with you in this world, not without a forum, not without shambles; not without your baths, taverns, shops, inns, markets, and other places of traffic. We voyage, moreover, with you, serve in your armies, labour in your fields, and trade with you."—*Apol.* ch. 42.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VIEW TAKEN BY CHRISTIANS OF THEIR CALLING.

As the whole life of the Christian, from the beginning to the end, is a conflict with the world and the powers of darkness, a conflict within and without, the kingdom of God in this world must appear as militant, and must make its way by conflict; so that often, in Holy Writ, the calling of the Christian is compared to that of the military life, and the

Christian is represented as the soldier of his Lord. This image was very clear and familiar to the first Christians. Though Christians, in later ages, may have been led to forget the nature of their calling as one of conflict, amidst external tranquillity and prosperity, yet in primitive times their entire outward condition served to remind them of the spiritual warfare; for the church found itself on all sides in conflict with the heathen world, and the public profession made by Christians compelled them to take a share in this conflict. Christians rejoiced to consider themselves as the soldiers of God and Christ (*milites Dei et Christi*), against the hostile powers of darkness, against everything which appeared to them as belonging to the kingdom of Satan, against the service of sin and of false gods. Whoever united himself by baptism (the *signaculum Christianorum*) to the Christian church, gave his hand to the president of the congregation, as a pledge that he renounced Satan and his angels and all his works, by which was intended not merely all idolatry and its accompaniments, magic, soothsaying, heathenish diversions, &c., but all sinful indulgences. The positive side of their vow was an obligation to a life consecrated to God, and corresponding to the doctrine of Christ. This vow was called the Christian military oath (the *sacramentum militiæ Christianæ*). The confession of faith, which Christians learnt by heart and repeated at their baptism, was regarded as the Christian watchword (*tessera militiæ Christianæ symbolum*). The sign of the cross, as the sign of their general's victory, the sign of the sufferings by which he overcame the kingdom of darkness, the sign on their forehead, they likened to the character (*stigma militare*) which was stamped on the arm or the hand, when a soldier was taken into the ranks. With this sign they were wont to rise in the morning from their beds, and in the evening to go to rest; thus their waking and their sleeping, their acting and their resting, were consecrated. All transactions and employments were begun with it. It was their safeguard against all evil; trusting in this sign of their Lord's victory, they faced every danger with confidence. Indeed, though we are here shown how the gospel had been received by those who overcame the world and the powers of darkness, even Christians in flesh and blood; yet a fondness for what was external, leading

to superstition, was combined with the deep sentiments of Christian piety, and a divine power was ascribed to outward signs, which ought only to have been ascribed to the spiritual realities they symbolised. And by such examples we are led to reflect on the warning of the Apostle Paul, that we should not end in the flesh, having begun in the Spirit. (Gal. iii. 3.)

To this comparison of the christian with the military profession, the beautiful words refer in the epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp: "Strive to please Him in whose service you are fighting, for from him you will receive the pay. Let none of you prove deserters." Augustin, in his sermons, frequently makes beautiful use of the same comparison. We will quote a few specimens. In his 302nd sermon, he says: "Thou art a Christian, thou carriest on thy forehead the cross of Christ. The mark of service thus impressed on thee, shows for what end thou hast made a profession. When He hung on the cross, which cross thou carriest on thy forehead, (he adds, in order to warn against that dependence on externals, 'make not the sign of the cross thy joy, but the sign of Him who hung on the cross,') he looked round on his raging foes, he bore with those who insulted him, he prayed for his enemies. The Physician healed the sick by his blood, even when he was dying, for he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And this was no empty word; it was in the power of this word, that afterwards thousands believed on Him whom they had put to death, and learnt to suffer for Him who had suffered for them and by them. From this sign we learn why we are Christians."—"Let the baptised," he says in another passage, "look into his own heart, whether that has been accomplished in his heart which has symbolically taken place in his body; let him see whether he carries love in his heart, and then let him say, I am born of God. But if he has not this, he may indeed have the mark of service stamped upon him, but he wanders about with it as a deserter." In another sermon he says: "Compare thyself with a soldier; when thou art standing in the service, bearing the mark of thy commander, thou canst, with full confidence, perform thy service. But when thou bearest it out of service, the mark will not only be of no use for the service, but thou wilt be punished as a deserter." He applies this to the Christian who, by apostacy to a worldly

life, has become unfaithful to his Lord, and against whom the symbols of the sacred service, to which he was pledged, bear witness.

Christians were always reminded of their baptismal vow, when they were exhorted to fidelity in their Christian duties. Tertullian writes, when exhorting Christians to stedfastness under persecution: "We were called to the service of the living God (*ad militiam Dei vivi*), when we took our military oath by answering in the affirmative to the questions, 'Dost thou renounce,' &c. proposed at our baptism, (*cum in sacramenti verba respondimus.*) No soldier takes luxuries with him; he marches to battle not from his sitting-room but from the camp, where all kinds of hardship and inconvenience are to be met with. Even in peace soldiers learn by labour and heavy tasks to endure war, since they are always under arms, perform their exercise in the open field, and dig trenches. Therefore, ye blessed ones, regard all your hardships as exercise for your powers of body. You are engaged in a good conflict, in which the living God is your judge, where the Holy Spirit directs your exercises, and the reward of victory is an angelic life in heaven, eternal glory."

As the calling of Christians, in relation to the world, or on its negative side, is represented as a military calling, so in its own nature, or on its positive side, it appears as a priestly calling. Christians, according to Psalm cx., are a nation of warriors and priests. There is a close connection between the two. By their priesthood their conflict with the world is consecrated; they carry on a holy war as priests. Since they are called, as priests, to consecrate everything to God, to keep at a distance all that is ungodly, they are thereby called to the conflict, without which their priesthood cannot subsist, nor be preserved in its purity.

This idea of the universal priesthood was one deeply rooted in the original Christian consciousness, as it stood in essential connection with the entire peculiarity of the Christian stand-point, with that which distinguishes Christianity from all other religions. Christianity has broken down the wall of separation between priests and laity, spiritual and secular persons. By Christ, the one true Priest, all who believe in him are consecrated to the heavenly Father; as his brethren

they become priests with him, connected with him by faith; filled through him by the spirit of adoption, they rise to the heavenly sanctuary, whither he has gone before them, and to which he has opened the entrance for them; hence they need no human being as a priest to describe for them the sanctuary, which is revealed to them no more in shadows and types, but in truth and reality, or to lead them as children in the leading-strings of ordinances. They are dependent on no one to deal out to them, according to his wisdom, as steward of the heavenly treasures, what they can all receive in an equal manner from the hands of Eternal Love, or to tell them what it is necessary for them to know, for they are all taught of God. They learn from the same Spirit who guides into all truth, and have the same inward anointing; for all, there is one spirit, one divine life, one faith, one hope, one Redeemer, who alone will be called Master, before whom all who wish to be regarded as his disciples must, in the same manner, confess themselves sinners, in order to receive redemption and sanctification immediately from Him alone, and not from or through any man whatever. The time was gone by in which they worshipped dumb idols, as they were led by their priests; they had now attained their majority in religon. The high-priest of humanity who conducted them, not to dumb idols, but to the living God, led them not blindly, but gave them an inward light which never forsook them, one Spirit who revealed Himself in manifold gifts.

As no particular priestly class is established among Christians, but all are comprehended in one priestly generation, so also the priestly office and the worship of God are no longer confined to this or that special act, but all acts are now considered as having a priestly character, as a kind of divine service for the worship of God in spirit and in truth. And thus the calling pointed out to every Christian by his peculiar station which God has assigned him, must be his special priesthood. Accordingly, every Christian, in virtue of his peculiar nature, animated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, as the common principle of life to all Christians, receives his special gifts of grace to operate with them in his own particular calling as a member for the advantage of the whole body. Justin Martyr says: "While the prophets of the old covenant received only special gifts and powers from the

divine Spirit, Christ, on the contrary, possessed the whole fulness of this divine Spirit, and he imparts to believers spiritual gifts of his fulness as to the prophets of the old covenant. Christians, after they have been enlightened,* receive, one the spirit of knowledge, another the spirit of counsel (Christian practical wisdom), another the spirit of power, another the spirit of healing, another the spirit of prophecy, another the spirit of teaching, another the spirit of the fear of God." In reference to this impartation of the gifts of grace, we must consider that, although it is the same Holy Spirit whom all the powers and talents of Christians, throughout all ages, are destined to serve as instruments, yet the primitive, apostolic age was distinguished more by what appeared as immediate in his operations, to which we give the name of wonders in a narrower sense; but in the later development of the church, the medium of gradual culture and practice is made use of instead of the immediate, though still all is to be regarded as animated and guided by the Holy Spirit. At that time there were still instances of those effects of the agency of the Holy Spirit that distinguished the apostolic church, among which are to be reckoned the gift of healing, of which we have adduced some instances above, and the gift of prophecy, to which latter a certain power of divination developed under the influence of the Holy Spirit, which human life and science cannot dispense with, in a certain manner corresponds. Moreover, we cannot omit noticing that even as to those Christian virtues which must be combined to form the whole Christian character and life, one is more prominent in one person, and another in another, and may be considered in each case as the distinguishing grace of the individual.

In reference to the universal Christian priesthood, Justin Martyr says:† "We are through Jesus Christ devoted as one man to God the Creator of the universe; through the name of his first-begotten Son we put off our defiled garments, that is, our sins; and being influenced by the word of his calling, we are the true high-priestly race of God, as God himself testifies, saying, that in every place among the Gen-

* This refers to the regeneration through baptism, which in that age was distinguished by the name of "Illumination."

† Dialog. c. Tryphone. c. 116.

tiles pure and acceptable sacrifices shall be offered to him (Mal. i. 11). God receives no sacrifices from any one, excepting through his priests. . . .* Prayers and thanksgivings presented by the worthy are the only perfect sacrifices and acceptable to God." "All righteous persons have the dignity of priests," says Irenæus; and in another passage, "The Jews devoted their tithes to God, but Christians who have attained freedom devote their all joyfully and freely to the Lord's service." "Prayer," says Tertullian, "is the spiritual sacrifice which takes the place of the sacrifices under the old covenant. The gospel teaches us what God requires: 'The time cometh when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him.' God is a spirit, and hence he requires such worshippers. We are the true worshippers and the true priests, who pray in the spirit and offer to God in the spirit the prayers that are due and acceptable to him. These, devoted by the whole heart, fed by faith, tended by truth, complete in innocence, pure by chastity, crowned by love, we ought to bring up to the altar of God with the train of good works amid psalms and hymns, to obtain all things for us from God."† To the same tenor also is the beautiful passage of Origen, in which he vindicates Christians from the reproach cast on them by the heathen, that, unlike the professors of other religions, they had no temples, images, or altars. "He (Celsus) does not perceive," says Origen, "that among us the souls of the righteous are the altars on which are offered, in a true and spiritual manner, sacrifices well-pleasing to God, namely, prayers from a pure conscience. The images and the offerings, as they are not the work of men's hands, but are formed by the word of God, are the virtues by which we form ourselves according to the model of the first-born of the whole creation, in whom is the original type of all righteousness and wisdom. The most glorious

* Dialog. c. Tryphone. c. 117.

† Nos sumus veri adoratores et veri sacerdotes, qui spiritu orantes spiritu sacrificamus orationem Dei propriam et acceptabilem, quam scilicet requisivit quam sibi prospexit. Hanc de toto corde devotam, fide pastum, veritate curatam, innocentia integram, castitate mundam, agape coronatam, cum pompa operum bonorum inter psalmos et hymnos deducere ad Dei altare debemus, omnia nobis a Deo impetraturam.—Tertull. *de Orat.* 23.

image, far exalted above the whole creation, is indeed in our Saviour, who could say of himself (John xiv. 10): The Father is in me; but also in every one of those who according to their ability imitate him, is the image of him who created him (Col. ii.), an image formed by looking up to God with a pure heart. And generally, all Christians seek to set up such altars and images in their hearts, not those devoid of life and feeling into which they introduce their false gods,* but such as receive the Spirit of God into themselves, which connects itself with what is related to it. This is shown in Holy Writ, when God promises to the righteous (Lev. xxvi. 12), 'I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people;' and the Saviour (John xiv. 23), 'If a man love me, he will keep my words; and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.' "

As the peculiar nature of Christianity is closely connected with the view here given of an universal priesthood of Christians, so it was the most important and melancholy revolution in the development of the Christian consciousness which led to the formation of the Roman Catholic stand-point, when in the course of the second century the Old Testament point of view of a peculiar priesthood and priestly order began to find an entrance into the Christian church. But in various usages the view originally taken and founded on the ineffaceable Christian consciousness often produced reactions against the judaical spirit which was beginning to prevail. We may notice such in Tertullian: "All Christians," he says, "are now in the position of those who were priests under the Old Testament dispensation; the particular Jewish priesthood was a prophetic type of the universal Christian priesthood. We are priests, being called for that purpose by Christ. The highest priest, the great priest of the heavenly Father, Christ, since he has clothed us with himself ('for as many of you as are baptized have put on Christ,' Gal. iii. 27), 'has made us kings and priests to God and his Father.' (Rev. i. 6.)" And in another passage he combats the idea of a priestly caste in

* The contrast which Origen here makes is this: The heathen supposed that by certain magical formulæ they could introduce the gods themselves into their images. But Christians, as genuine living images of God, receive the Holy Spirit with a susceptible disposition.

Christianity. "We are under a delusion, if we believe that what is not permitted to the priests is permitted to the laity. Are not we laics also priests? (Rev. i. 6.)"* He regards the distinction between clergy and laity not as existing originally, but as something introduced by the church for the sake of order. This distinction, he thinks, should be regarded by the laity for that reason. "But where there are no clergy," he says, "thou mayest also baptize, administer the Lord's Supper, and art thyself a priest. Where there are three (Matt. xviii. 20), there is a church, although they may be all laics. Every man lives by his faith, and there is no respect of persons with God; for before God not those who hear the law are justified, but those who do the law. We ought all of us so to regulate our lives according to God's will, that we may be everywhere fitted to administer his sacraments. One God, one faith, one law of life." "How can the priests," he asks, "be chosen from the laity, if the laity do not previously live so as be fitted for the priesthood?" An argument, this, of special force in that age, since then there was no peculiar preparation for the clerical office; there was no theological school, unless the whole church might be regarded as a school; whoever was distinguished for Christian knowledge, piety, fortitude, and zeal, especially under persecution, was considered eligible for an ecclesiastical office.

It has indeed been maintained that Tertullian's language must be regarded not as the expression of the primitive, pure Christian spirit, but that the enthusiastic tendency of Montanism by which the church was then agitated, was the source of such views and of such expressions. But although a layman in Phrygia who boasted of being favoured with special revelations of the Holy Spirit, gave an impulse to a movement that involved much that was enthusiastic, by which also Tertullian was affected, yet we are not to regard everything which arose from this movement, or was excited by it, and rendered prominent, as sheer enthusiasm. This mental tendency was opposed to many erroneous elements which had already disturbed the pure Christian consciousness, and Montanism, on many points, advocated the interests of the primitive Christian truth in its conflict with such errors. Among

* Vani erimus, si putaverimus quod sacerdotibus non liceat, laicis licere. Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus?—Tertull. *de Exhort. Cast.* 7.

these points was the consciousness again revived of the universal Christian priesthood which was common to all the faithful. That this was the original Christian view, and not an error proceeding from Montanism, we may learn from what Tertullian says, when he had to combat with these reactions of the consciousness of the universal Christian priesthood when they opposed the new Montanist principles. "When we exalt and inflate ourselves against the clergy, then we are all one, then we are all priests, because he hath made us priests to God and the Father. (Rev. i. 6.)" (*De Monogamia*, cap. xii.)

While the oriental theosophists who had embraced Christianity, without having undergone an entire revolution in their habits of thinking, sought to transfer to Christianity a marked distinction belonging to the ancient oriental systems of religion of a higher wisdom, an esoteric priestly doctrine, and an exoteric popular religion, (the Gnostics, who boasted of a higher knowledge, a spiritual Christianity, compared with the multitude, who were only capable of a faith founded on authority) —the church, on the contrary, adhered to the principle that all Christians in virtue of their one faith in the one crucified, risen, and glorified Saviour, stood with one another in the fellowship of a higher life, so that all true Christians are necessarily enlightened by the Spirit of God, and in truth spiritually minded men. Against the assumptions of the theosophists, Clement of Alexandria vindicated the universally spiritual character of all true Christians. "We live already, we who are made free from death. To follow Christ is already salvation. 'Whosoever heareth my word and believeth Him who sent me,' he says, 'hath everlasting life, and cometh not into condemnation, but hath passed from death unto life.' Believing and being born again constitute already true life; for God does nothing by halves. 'Ye yourselves are taught of God,' says the apostle. (1 Thess. iv. 9.) We cannot therefore imagine that he has left his instructions imperfect. Whoever is born again and enlightened, is consequently freed from darkness and has received the light; just as he who has awoke from sleep is awake within; or rather as he who operates for a cataract, does not communicate new light from without to the diseased eye, since he has nothing of the kind, but has only taken away an obstacle from the sight, and

given freedom to the pupil of the eye; so also we are freed by baptism from sin, which, like a mist, obstructs the rays of the divine light; and the eye of the mind, by which alone we can discern what is divine, is kept free from obstructions, when the Holy Spirit flows down upon us from heaven. That the faith of the gospel is the one universal remedy for all mankind is plainly declared by the apostle Paul, when he says (Gal. iii. 23), 'Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.' Do you not hear that we no longer stand under that law which is attended with fear, but under the teacher of freedom, the Son of God? Then he adds those words by which all distinction of persons is taken away: 'For ye are all the children of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.' Therefore," he goes on to say, "there are not in Christianity some possessing a higher wisdom, and others of a carnal mind, but all true Christians are freed from the dominion of carnal desires; they are become like one another in the Lord, and a clerical body."

As the introduction of such distinctions affecting the universality and equality of the Christian calling tended on the one hand to foster spiritual pride, so on the other hand it lowered the requirements of Christianity in reference to the great body of its professors; the distinction, diametrically opposed to the genius of the gospel, of a higher Christian perfection, for which only a few persons withdrawn from the world were fitted, and a common Christianity which allowed of secular engagements, and the ties of domestic life,—this distinction made "the way that leadeth unto life" *broad* for the many, which our Saviour pronounces "*narrow*" for all without exception. We learn from Clement of Alexandria, that there were persons who evaded exhortations to greater earnestness in the Christian life by the excuse "that they were no philosophers, that they had not learnt to read, and could not even read the Bible." Clement says in reply, "If they cannot read, this will be no excuse for them, since they

can hear* the word of God; the gospel is not the property of the worldly-wise, but of those who are wise towards God. The scripture of the gospel which is divine, and yet can be learnt by the illiterate, is love," (that is, the gospel must evince its presence in the hearts of all Christians alike in its divine power, vitally and efficaciously by love).

Moreover Christians regarded with joy their new condition as that of children in relation to the new life acquired through Christ, the new childlike relation to their heavenly Father, the holy filial devotedness to God, free from all selfishness and falsehood. Hence, in many districts in Africa, there was the symbolic custom of placing before the newly baptized a mixture of milk and honey, as a sign of Christian childhood, and of the childlike mind inseparable from it. Christ was the instructor of children, and condescended to all their necessities in order to draw them to himself. And Clement, in his hymn to Christ,† says, "Assemble thy simple children to praise piously, to sing hymns without guile, with mouths unknowing of evil, to Christ, the leader of children."

They were also pleased to regard themselves as free children in the kingdom of grace, in distinction from the servants under the law, or as slaves made free by the Redeemer. A Christian who was one of the slaves in the imperial service, and was brought before the tribunal with other Christians who were free citizens, in answer to the question who he was, replied: "I am indeed one of Cæsar's slaves, but a Christian on whom Christ himself has bestowed freedom; by his beneficence and grace I am partaker of the same hope with those whom I here see before you."

We have already noticed how Tertullian allowed himself to

* The reading of the holy Scriptures occupied a principal part of the time in the public services of the Church; it was intended by this means to give those persons who could not read an opportunity of obtaining an intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures.

† Τοὺς σοὺς ἀφελεῖς
Παῖδας ἄγειρον
Αἰνεῖν ἁγίως
Ὑμνεῖν ἀδόλως
Ἀκάκοις στόμασιν
Παίδων ἡγήτορα Χριστόν.

Clem. Alex. *Hymnus Christi*, v. 5–10. (Pott. p. 312.) Opera, vol. i. p. 347. ed. Klotz.

be led away by a pious but one-sided extravagance of misdirected zeal to reject all crowning with garlands as something heathenish. As this led him to notice the various occasions on which this ceremony was performed, he mentions amongst others, the crowning of slaves on obtaining their manumission. He endeavoured to show that even this was no proper occasion for crowning Christians. Tertullian, by the constitution of his mind, was often impelled to push what was true in itself to an extreme, where it must mingle with falsehood; and in this particular case we cannot help perceiving, that while he justly appreciated the freedom bestowed by the Son of God as the highest, without which all other freedom is only a semblance, he fell into the error of undervaluing the importance of earthly freedom, which is a real good, though not the highest. Genuine Christianity, while it leads us to regard as nothing every thing else when compared with the highest good, the kingdom of God, acknowledges in other things, a due subordinate value; thus the Apostle Paul extols the freedom which the Redeemer gives, even to persons languishing in earthly bondage, as the highest and only true freedom, and yet says to the slave, "If thou mayest be made free, use it rather." (1 Cor. vii. 21.) Although we must make use of this to correct and limit what Tertullian says, according to the light in which the divine word instructs us to contemplate heavenly and earthly things, yet we feel ourselves carried away by the enthusiasm with which he speaks of the nature of that true freedom which is founded on internal dependence on the Lord. "Earthly freedom," he says, "gives crowns. But thou art already redeemed by Christ, and that at a great price. How can the world set free another's servant? Though it seems to be freedom, yet is it seen also to be servitude. In the world all things are imaginary, and nothing real. For even when according to civil relations thou wast a slave, thou wast free from man as redeemed by Christ; and now though made free by man, thou art Christ's servant. If thou thinkest that the freedom of the world is true liberty, so that thou even distinguishest it by a crown, thou hast returned to the service of man, which thou thinkest to be liberty; thou hast lost the freedom of Christ, which thou thinkest to be servitude."

But Christians were far from wishing to abuse that freedom

in which they gloried, by giving licence to the flesh; they knew, as appears from what has been said, that the true freeman was a servant of God, and that to serve him was their true happiness. They were conscious that the only true freedom consisted in being free to fulfil the law of love with delight and joy. "Not for this purpose," says Irenæus, "has he set us free, that we might forsake him (for no one who shuts himself out from the goods of his master, can himself obtain what is necessary for his happiness); but that the more we experience his grace, we may love him more."

CHAPTER V.

FAVOURITE EMBLEMS IN USE AMONG CHRISTIANS.

THE emblems which were in most frequent use among Christians in this age, show us the sentiments and ideas by which their inner life was animated. As yet, there were, indeed, no paintings and images in their simple places of worship, for they shunned the use of such embellishments as approaching too near the idolatry of the heathen, and we have already noticed that the absence of images made one ground of reproach cast upon their religion by the pagans. They did not, however, reject the use of the arts in domestic life. Here they saw walls, drinking vessels, seal-rings, covered with such images as were furnished by the heathen idolatry and mythology. But since these images could not harmonize with their Christian feelings, they felt compelled to substitute other images or emblems taken from the Christian life. A favourite figure on the goblets of Christians was the shepherd in our Saviour's parable, carrying a lamb on his shoulders: by this they expressed their constant gratitude to the Redeemer who had rescued them from a corrupt world, on whose grace alone they depended, while they rejoiced to consider themselves as sinners redeemed by him. On their seal-rings they had most frequently such images as the following: —*a dove*, the well-known symbol of the Holy Spirit; *a ship* sailing towards Heaven, representing the Christian Church

and the souls belonging to it; *a lyre*, signifying joy in the Holy Spirit, or the Christian living to the praise of God; *an anchor*, or the Christian hope entering within the veil; *a fish* or *a fisherman*, the spiritual draught of fishes (Matt. iv. 19); Christians as regenerated by baptism, as it were born of water (children whom the Redeemer has drawn out of the water, as Clement of Alexandria expresses himself); moreover, it so happens, that the Greek word for *fish* (ΙΧΘΥΣ) is composed of the first letters of each word in the sentence Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ, *Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour*. In allusion to this, Tertullian says, "We little fishes (*pisciculi*) were born in water like our ἰχθυν, Jesus Christ, and can only be saved by continuing in water;" *i. e.* only by fidelity to our baptismal covenant, and preserving the grace we then received. In these images with which Christians were most familiar, we perceive the direction of their thoughts to heaven, their childlike love to the Redeemer, and their consciousness that they could do nothing of themselves, but were indebted to him for everything; and thus we are led to speak of what was regarded as the animating principle of their inner life.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE INNER LIFE OF CHRISTIANS, AND ITS OUTWARD MODE OF MANIFESTATION.

It was the vital principle of Christianity, practically considered, that from fellowship with the Redeemer was derived the participation of his divine life, which gradually penetrated the whole nature of man, and manifested itself by a new and holy walk. "As the dry earth," says Irenæus, "when it is not moistened, brings forth no fruit, so we also—who were formerly only dry wood—can never bring forth the fruit of a divine life without dew from above." "Man," the same writer observes, "having experienced from what misery he is freed, must be ever thankful to God; and after he has obtained from him the gift of immortal life, must love him so much the

more; for to whom much is forgiven, he loveth much. Man is destined to receive into his soul the operation of God, in order that the wisdom and power of God may be manifested in him. As the skill of the physician is manifested to the sick, so God manifests himself to man."

"We," says Clement of Rome, at the end of the first century, "who have been called by the will of God in Christ, are not justified by ourselves, nor by our own wisdom or understanding, or piety, or by the works which we have performed in holiness of heart, but by faith. . . . . What then shall we do, brethren? Shall we cease from good works and renounce charity? The Lord grant that this may never be the case with us; but let us hasten with earnestness to accomplish every good work. For He, the Creator and Lord of all things, is delighted with his own works." (1 *Ep. ad Cor.* c. 32, 33.) He means to say, we are indebted for our justification only to the divine grace, which we appropriate by faith; we cannot merit it by our works, for it is through faith that we first obtain sanctifying grace, and therefore power to act aright. All that we have is only a work of grace, which is bestowed on us sinners without merit on our part; and when we are renewed by grace, we still continue below the ideal of holiness, which humanity is destined to represent, and therefore we can never lay claim to eternal happiness as the reward due to perfect obedience to the divine law. But ought we, because we are certain of justification by faith, and because we cannot merit it by our own works, to pay no attention to the performance of goodness? No; being renewed after the image of God, and filled with a divine life, we are necessarily impelled by that divine life to exercise a godly disposition; we feel ourselves happy only while we are doing good—doing good not in order to obtain anything by it, but because the new nature implanted in us naturally impels us to it; just as the self-sufficient God, whose image we now bear, is constantly operating out of free love, and manifests himself by his works. In the same manner the author of the Epistle to Diognetus, a production probably bordering on the apostolic age, after speaking of the grace of redemption, says, "With what joy wilt thou be filled when thou hast attained to the knowledge of this! How wilt thou love him who has thus first loved thee! But loving him, thou wilt

be an imitator of his goodness. And do not marvel if man is able to be an imitator of God. . . . . Whoever takes the burden of his neighbour on himself, or who in what he is superior seeks to benefit his inferior, and communicates to the needy what he has received from God, he becomes as it were a god to those who receive from him; he is an imitator of God." (ch. 10.)

Tertullian regarded the entire life of Christians as a thank-offering of the redeemed, which is presented to God by the eternal Priest of the human race. Comparing Christians purified from sin to the cleansed leper, according to Lev. xiv., he says, "The sinner purified by the word presents to God his gifts in the temple, prayer and praise in the congregation through Christ, the universal priest of the Father." Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, says to Christians, "Let us know and consider that we are members of God's temple. We are the priests and ministers of that temple. Let us serve him to whom we have begun to listen. Let us, who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, evince our obedience by rendering every possible service to the government of the Redeemer, and let us take all the care in our power that nothing impure or unholy remain in the temple of God, that he may not be provoked to forsake the place of his habitation. These are the words of the Lord, who heals and warns, "Behold, thou art made whole; go and sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee.' (John v. 14.) After he has restored to soundness, he commands to abstain from sin; he allowed him not to wander about without restraint, but spoke a severe word of threatening to him—to the man, who, having been healed by him, was bound to serve him." The same writer says, "We must strive after the eternal and the divine; we must do all things according to the will of God, in order to tread in the footsteps and teaching of our Lord, who says, 'I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.' But if the servant be not greater than his lord, and if the freed-man is bound to obey him who sets him free, so must we, who wish to be Christians, imitate what Christ has said and done. It stands written; we read and hear it; the church enjoins it upon us: 'He who saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked.' (1 John ii. 6.) Only then does our walk correspond

to the name to which we have confessed; only then will the faithful obtain their reward when they practise in the life what they believe." "Not merely he who sacrifices to idols," writes the same bishop to Antonianus, "but every one who goes on in sin, and does Satan's will, serves evil spirits and false gods." He says to Christians, "If we are the children of God, if we have already begun to be the temple of God, if we have received the Holy Spirit, in order to live holy and spiritually, if we have raised our eyes from earth to heaven, if we have directed a heart full of God and Christ to heaven and divine things, then let us do nothing but what is worthy of God and Christ, as the apostle exhorts and urges us (Col. iii. 1–4). Let us, who have risen again with Christ by heavenly regeneration, think and act Christianly, as the same apostle exhorts us, 'As is the heavenly, so are they who are heavenly; and as we have borne the image of the earthly, so let us also bear the image of the heavenly.'" These words of the apostle in 1 Cor. xv. 49, do not in their literal application belong to this subject; but yet Cyprian might in a spiritual sense make use of them, for, according to the apostle's doctrine, only that will come to perfection at the resurrection which has already been preparing in this temporal life, and has begun in the germ which must be developed more and more; namely, renovation after the image of the heavenly man, Christ, in virtue of the inward reception and appropriation of this heavenly man; hence Cyprian might justly add, But we cannot bear the image of the heavenly unless we can already show that the likeness of Christ is begun, for that the old walk is laid aside, and the new one must be proved by the divine truth being apparent in thee. There must be a divine course of conduct corresponding to God, the heavenly Father; and God must be glorified by the lives of men; for only to those who glorify him has He promised that He will glorify them again.

CHAPTER VII.

GENERAL DELINEATION OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

THIS divine life could be manifested in all the diversified relations and conditions of society; it allowed all outward human arrangements to remain as they were, as far as they involved nothing contradictory to the laws of morality and the pure worship of God, but infused a new spirit into them. While Christians outwardly submitted to all existing laws and social institutions, they elevated themselves by a life resting in God, by their heavenly conversation, above all that was limiting in these earthly regulations. "We do not speak great things, but live them," says Cyprian.* Let us hear how the author of the epistle to Diognetus describes the life of Christians in this respect: † "Christians are not separated from other men by country, nor by language, nor by customs. They dwell not in cities of their own, nor make use of a

* Non loquimur magna, sed vivimus.—Cyprian. *de Bono Patientiæ*, p. 247.

† Χριστιανοὶ γὰρ οὔτε γῇ, οὔτε ἔθεσι διακεκριμένοι τῶν λοιπῶν εἰσὶν ἀνθρώπων. . . . κατοικοῦντες δὲ πόλεις Ἑλληνίδας τε καὶ βαρβαρους, ὡς ἕκαστος ἐκληρώθη, ἐν τοῖς ἐγχωριοις ἔθεσιν ἀκολουθοῦντες ἔν τε ἐσθῆτι καὶ διαίτῃ καὶ τῷ λοιπῷ βίῳ, θαυμαστην καὶ ὁμολογουμένως παράδοξον ἐκδείκνυνται τὴν κατάστασιν τῆς ἑαυτῶν πολιτείας. Πατρίδας οἰκοῦσιν ἰδίας, ἀλλ' ὡς πάροικοι· μετέχουσι πάντων ὡς πολῖται, καὶ πανθ' ὑπομείνουσιν ὡς ξένοι. Πᾶσα ξένη πατρὶς ἐστιν αὗτῶν, καὶ πᾶσα πατρὶς ξένη. Γαμοῦσιν ὡς πάντες· τεκνογονοῦσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ ῥίπτουσι τὰ γεννώμενα. . . . Ἐν σαρκὶ τυγχανοῦσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατὰ σάρκα ζῶσιν. Ἐπὶ γῆς διατρίβουσιν, ἀλλ' ἐν ουρανῷ πολιτεύονται. Πείθονται τοῖς ὡρισμένοις νόμοις, καὶ τοῖς ἰδιοις βίοις νικῶσι τους νόμους. Ἀγαπῶσι πάντας, καὶ ὑπὸ πάντων διώκονται. Ἀγνοοῦνται καὶ κατακρίνονται· θανατοῦνται καὶ ζωοποιοῦνται. Πτωχεύουσι, καὶ πλουτίζουσι πολλούς. Πάντων ὑστεροῦνται, καὶ ἐν πᾶσι περισσεύουσιν. Ἀτιμοῦνται, καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀτιμίαις δοξάζονται· βλασφημοῦνται, καὶ δικαιοῦνται· λοιδοροῦνται, καὶ εὐλογοῦσιν· ὑβρίζονται, καὶ τιμῶσιν. Ἀγαθοποιοῦντες ὡς κακοὶ κολαζονται· κολαζόμενοι χαίρουσιν ὡς ζωοποιούμενοι. Ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ὡς ἀλλόφυλοι πολεμοῦνται, καὶ ὑπὸ Ἑλληνων διώκονται· καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς ἔχθρας εἰπεῖν οἱ μισοῦντες οὐκ ἔχουσιν. Ἁπλῶς δε εἰπεῖν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχή, τοῦτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κὸσμῳ Χριστιανοί.—*Epistola ad Diognetum*, 5, 6.

peculiar dialect, nor affect a singular mode of life. They live in the cities of the Greeks or the barbarians, as each one's lot may be; and with regard to dress and food, and other matters of every-day life, they follow the customs of the country; yet they show a peculiarity of conduct, wonderful and striking to all. They dwell in their own native land as sojourners. They take a part in everything as citizens, and yet endure all things as if strangers. Every foreign country is as a fatherland, and every fatherland as a foreign country. They marry like all men, and beget children; but they do not expose their children." (A frequent custom among the heathen in that age.) "They live in the flesh, but not according to the flesh. They pass their time on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the established laws, and yet raise themselves above the laws by their lives. They love all, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned, They are killed and made alive;" (that is, their death leads them to life; they enter through sufferings on an eternal life; hence the death-day of the martyrs was called their birth-day.) "They are poor, and make many rich. They are in want of all things, and abound in all things. They are dishonoured, and amidst their dishonour are glorified . . . . In a word, what the soul is to the body, that are Christians in the world. As the soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, so are Christians dispersed through all the cities of the world. The soul, indeed, dwells in the body, but it is not of the body; and so Christians live in the world, but are not of the world. The invisible soul is inclosed in the visible body; so Christians are known as being in the world, but their piety remains invisible. The flesh hates and makes war against the soul (though the soul does the flesh no injury), because it forbids the indulgence of its pleasures; and the world hates Christians, not because they refuse it, but for opposing its pleasures. The soul loves the flesh that hates it, and the members of the body; and Christians love those who hate them. The soul is inclosed in the body, and yet holds the body together; and Christians are detained in the world as in custody, and yet they hold the world together. The immortal soul dwells in the mortal tabernacle, and Christians dwell as sojourners in mortal things, expecting immortality

in the heavens . . . . God has assigned them so important a post which it is not lawful for them to quit."

Justin Martyr gives the following description of the lives of Christians: "We who were once slaves of lust, now delight in purity of morals; we who once practised magical arts," (the various deceptions and tricks of a pretended magic then so common among the heathen,) "have consecrated ourselves to the good and uncreated God; we who once prized riches and possessions above all things, now contribute what we have to the common use, and distribute to every one who is in want; we who once hated and murdered one another, and on account of our differences would not have a common hearth with those who were not of the same tribe, now, since Christ has appeared, live in common with them, and pray for our enemies, and endeavour to persuade those who hate us unjustly, that living according to the admirable counsels of Christ, they may enjoy a good hope of obtaining the same blessings with ourselves from God the ruler of all."

The great moral effects of Christianity required no splendid array of outward circumstances in order to make them evident, like the great effects of patriotism in antiquity, which yet was a sentiment confined with the limits of egoism.* Christian virtue, quiet and unpretending, going forth with fear and trembling, but under the form of a servant, having in its bosom the consciousness of the dignity of the divine relationship of the children of God, which raised it above all earthly glory—this virtue could find its place in the meanest cottage as well as in the palace, or more easily in the former, since there it met with less opposition from the deceptive glare of worldly grandeur; and in contrast to earthly poverty, the hidden glory beamed forth with greater brightness when lodged in a mean receptacle.

The slaves, also, among whom Christianity in early times made many converts, acquired the same exalted dignity of the children of God, and were acknowledged by their fellow Christians as brethren. They appeared in the public meet-

* In all well ordered polities, if we may judge from the experience of past ages, the attachment of men to their country is in danger of becoming an absorbing principle, inducing not merely a forgetfulness of private interests, but of the immutable claims of humanity and justice."—Robert Hall, *Works*, i. 372. [Tr.]

ings with all the rest as equal before the Lord; they partook like others of communion with the Lord in the holy supper, as members of the one body of Christ, in which no distinction could exist between the slave and the freeman, but the members of which were all one in Christ Jesus. No one refused to give them the kiss of brotherhood at the holy rite, as to all the rest; at the common love-feasts they took their place among the other believers. But Christianity guarded against injuriously confounding spiritual and bodily freedom; it allowed the slave, in the consciousness of his blessed fellowship with Christ, to be satisfied with his lot, and to fulfil his calling with love, so that he obeyed not man but God, and hence as a slave he was no longer a slave. Christianity always operated outwards from within: it effected no violent revolutions, like the self-will which follows not God's ways with patient resignation, but wishes to effect those changes at once by an arm of flesh which can only succeed under God's guidance in gradual development. But when Christianity had penetrated deeper on all sides into the life of humanity, a relation must necessarily fall of itself which is opposed to the Christian universal philanthropy, and to the ideas spread by Christianity respecting the equal destiny and dignity of all men as created in the image of God, and called to rule over nature. Thus Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, writes respecting slaves to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna: "Despise not slaves and bondwomen; but they must not be puffed up, but let them serve more zealously for the glory of God, that they may obtain from God a better freedom. Let them not desire to be made free from the common fund, that they may not be found the slaves of [earthly] desire."

As heart-communion with God and their Redeemer was the essential necessity of Christians, as they were penetrated by the consciousness that left to their own weak and sinful nature they could do nothing without God, so they found their daily nourishment and strength, their help in all dangers, their consolation under all sufferings, in PRAYER, which will be the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRAYER.

TERTULLIAN exhorts to prayer in the following words:* "Under the arms of prayer let us guard the standard of our general. Praying, let us await the trumpet of the angel. . . . . All the angels pray. Every creature prays." (So he explains the morning notes of the birds.) "The Lord himself prayed." He speaks in the following manner of the characteristics of Christian prayer: "What has not God granted to prayer offered up in spirit and in truth, for such prayer he has required? . . . . The prayer of the old covenant delivered from flames, and wild beasts, and hunger, and yet had not received its form from Christ. But how much more efficacious is prayer now! It does not place the angel of the dew in the midst of the flames (Dan. iii. 28), nor shut the mouths of lions (Dan. vi.), nor bring the dinner of rustics to the hungry (2 Kings iv.). The grace now vouchsafed to men does not take away the sense of suffering, but it arms with endurance men who are suffering, feeling, and grieving; by its power it increases grace, that faith may know what it may expect from the Lord, being conscious what it suffers for the name of God. Formerly prayer brought down plagues, routed hostile armies, prevented beneficial rains. But now the prayer of righteousness averts the divine wrath, keeps watch for enemies, and supplicates for persecutors. . . . . Christ has conferred on prayer all power for good. Therefore it knows nothing unless to call back the souls of the departed from the way of death itself, to renovate the

* Oratio murus est fidei, arma et tela nostra adversus hominem, qui nos undique observat. Itaque nunquam inermes incedamus. Die stationis, nocte vigiliæ meminerimus. Sub armis orationis signum nostri imperatoris custodiamus, tubam angeli exspectemus orantes. Orant etiam angeli omnes. Orat omnis creatura. Orant pecudes et feræ et genua declinant. . . . Sed et aves nunc exsurgentes eriguntur ad cœlum, et alarum crucem pro manibus extendunt, et dicunt aliquid, quod oratio videatur. Quid ergo amplius de officio orationis? Etiam ipse Dominus oravit, cui sit honor et virtus in sæcula sæculorum.—Tertull. *de Orat.* § 24.

weak, to heal the sick, to free from the power of evil spirits, to loosen the bonds of the innocent. It washes away sins, repels temptations, extinguishes persecutions, consoles the feeble-minded, delights the magnanimous, guides travellers, stills the waves, nourishes the poor, controls the rich, raises the fallen, props the falling, and preserves the standing. Prayer is the bulwark of faith; our arms and weapons against the adversary who waylays us on every side. Therefore let us never go about unarmed."

Origen asserts the advantage and the power of prayer against certain proud theosophists, who despised prayer as a mark of weakness, since they were unwilling to feel weak in themselves (a sentiment that belongs to the very essence of the Christian disposition), in order to be strong in the Lord. Against such persons he says: "How much would each among us have to recount of the efficacy of prayer, if only he were thankfully to recall God's mercies. Souls which have been long unfruitful, becoming conscious of their death, and fructified by the Holy Spirit through persevering prayer, have given forth words of salvation full of the intuitions of truth. How many enemies have been driven back, when thousands in the service of the Evil One came into the field against us, and threatened to annihilate our faith. But our confidence was in those words, 'Some put their trust in chariots and in horses, but we will think on the name of the Lord our God' (Psa. xx. 7); for verily, 'a horse is a vain thing for safety.' . . . . How many have been exposed to temptations more burning than flame, and yet came out of them unhurt, without even the smell of the hostile flame having passed upon them! And what shall I further say? How often has it happened that those who were exposed to wild beasts, to evil spirits, and to cruel men, have muzzled them by prayers, so that they have not been able to touch with their teeth us who were the members of Christ. We know, also, that many who have been deserters from the statutes of God, and were just swallowed up by death, have been saved from destruction by repentance, and 'God has again wiped away the tears from their eyes.'" Cyprian says: "If *He* prayed who was without sin, how much more ought we to pray who are sinners? The Lord prayed not for himself; he prayed for our sins."

In general, according to a custom that already prevailed among the Jews, nine, twelve, and three o'clock were regarded by Christians as special times of prayer, though not to be observed in a manner inconsistent with Christian freedom; "for respecting the hours of prayer," says Tertullian,* "nothing is prescribed, excepting that we should pray at all times and in every place." Moreover, Christians began the day with prayer, and with prayer they closed it. Cyprian says, "We must pray early in the morning, in order that by our morning prayer the Lord's resurrection may be celebrated; and when the sun and the daylight depart from us, and we pray that the light may again dawn upon us, so we pray for the return of Christ, who will grant us the grace of everlasting light." They prayed before they took food, or bathed; for, as Tertullian says, "The refreshing and nourishing of the soul should precede the refreshing and nourishing of the body; the heavenly should go before the earthly." When a Christian from a foreign land, after being hospitably entertained as a brother, was about to take leave, he was dismissed with prayer; for it was a common expression among them in reference to such guests, "In thy brother thou hast seen thy Lord." They prepared for all social deliberations by prayer. On all important occasions which awakened general sympathy, such as impending persecutions, or when an individual whose life was of value for the whole church was in danger of death, it was customary to hold meetings for social prayer, and examples are recorded of special answers to prayer in such cases. "Often," says Irenæus, "when the whole church in one place has called upon God with fasting on account of some pressing necessity, life has been restored to the dead, and he has been granted to the prayer of Christians."

The Christian church, as we have already remarked, was very far from wishing to confine prayer, in a carnal Jewish sense, to certain times, as if a peculiar sanctity was attached to them. They regarded prayer as the breathing of the innermost Christian life, drawing down the enlivening Spirit from above. By prayer the whole life of a Christian was sanctified, and his whole life was to be one continual prayer,

* De temporibus orationis nihil omnino præscriptum est, nisi plane omni in tempore et loco orare.—Tertull. *de Orat.* § 18.

thanks for the grace of redemption, and petition for further grace in order to sanctify. "The whole life of a saint," says Origen,* "should be one great continuous prayer, and what is commonly called prayer is only a part of it." And Clement of Alexandria says,† "Prayer is intercourse with God, even if we do but lisp; if we only silently address God without opening our lips, yet cry to him with our inmost hearts, God hears without intermission whatever is thus said to him. If some persons appoint certain hours for prayer, yet the mature Christian prays through his whole life, since by prayer he strives to connect himself with God." Cyprian says, "We who live in Christ the true sun, and therefore in the true daylight, must surround the whole day with prayer; and when night succeeds to day, this also must not interrupt our prayers, for to the children of the light there is day even at night. For when is *he* without light who has light in his heart? Or when are the sun and day wanting to him, to whom Christ is sun and day? Renewed in spirit, and regenerated by God's grace, let us strive to be here what we shall be hereafter! Since in the kingdom of heaven we shall have pure day without the interruption of night, let us be awake for prayer by night as well as by day! Since there we shall pray and praise God without cessation, let us here also not cease to pray and to praise."‡

* Οὕτω γὰρ μόνως τὸ Ἀδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε ἐκδέξασθαι δυνάμεθα ὡς ἔνυατὸν ὂν εἰρημένον, εἰ πάντα τὸν βίον τοῦ ἁγίου, μίαν συναπτομένην μεγάλην εἴποιμεν εὐχήν· ἧς εὐχῆς μέρος ἐστί καὶ ἡ συνήθως ὀνομαζομένη εὐχή, οὐκ ἔλαττον τοῦ τρὶς ἑκάστης ἡμέρας ἐπιτελεῖσθαι ὀφειλουσα.—Origenes περὶ εὐχῆς, § 12.

† Ἔστιν οὖν, ὡς εἰπεῖν τολμηρότερον, ὁμιλία πρὸς θεὸν ἡ εὐχή. Κἂν ψιθυρίζοντες ἄρα, μηδὲ τὰ χείλη ἀνοίγοντες μετὰ σιγῆς προσλαλῶμεν, ἐνδοθεν κεκράγαμεν. Πᾶσαν γὰρ τὴν ἐνδιάθετον ὁμιλιαν ὁ θεὸς ἀδιαλείπτως ἐπαΐει . . . . Εἰ δέ τινες καὶ ὥρας τακτὰς ἀπονέμουσιν εὐχῆ, ὡς τρίτην φέρε καὶ ἕκτην καὶ ἐννάτην, ἀλλ' οὖν γε ὁ γνωστικὸς παρὰ ὅλον εὐχεται τὸν βίον, δι' εὐχῆς συνεῖναι μὲν σπεύδων θεῷ.—Clem. *Strom.* § 7, 722. (Pott. 854.)

‡ Nos, fratres dilectissimi, qui in Domine luce semper sumus, qui meminimus et tenemus quid esse accepta gratias cœperimus, computemus noctem pro die. Ambulare nos credamus semper in lumine, non impediamur a tenebris quas evasimus. Nulla sint horis nocturnis precum damna, nulla orationum pegra et ignava dispendia. Per Dei indulgentiam recreati et renati imitemur quod futuri sumus. Habituri in regno sine interventu noctis solum diem sic nocte quasi in lumine vigilemus. Oraturi semper et acturi gratias Deo, hic quoque orare et gratias agere non desinamus.—Cyprian. *de Orat. Dom.* § 36.

The Christian fathers combated a superstitious notion which attached great importance to a certain bodily posture and certain outward ceremonies in prayer; they endeavoured to show, as Cyprian in the passage above, that everything in prayer depended not on a certain posture of the body, but a certain posture of the heart. Thus Origen says, "It appears to me that whoever wishes to pray, should first retire into himself and collect his thoughts, and then surrender himself with so much greater ardour to prayer. He must, as much as possible, be impressed with the greatness of that Being to whom he draws nigh; that it is an insult to come to him negligently, as if we despised him: a man should come to prayer, dismissing from his mind all foreign matters; he raises his soul before his hands; he raises his spirit to God before his eyes; he should banish from his soul all desire of revenge, if there is any one from whom he has suffered wrong, when he is seeking that his own offences may not be punished by God. It cannot be doubted that among the various postures of the body that is preferable to others in which man stretches forth his hands and raises his eyes, as an image of that state of the disposition in which the soul should be found when praying. But we only think that this posture is to be preferred when no circumstances prevent it; for under certain circumstances a man may pray in a becoming manner sitting or even lying, as in case of illness. And under certain circumstances, as, for example, on shipboard, or when our employments do not permit us to retire and offer up our wonted prayer, a man may pray without appearing to pray. The apostle seems to refer, in Phil. ii. 10, to the spiritual bowing of the knee, since the heart throws itself down before God in the name of Jesus, and humbles itself in his presence." "God," Tertullian says, reproving those who uttered too loudly their prayers in public,* "hears not the voice but the heart, even as he looks into the heart." And against those who believed that they ought to wash before every prayer, he says, "What can prayer effect with washed hands but with an impure mind? Purity of mind is necessary even for the hands, that before they are raised to God they should be pure from deceit, bloodshed, cruelty, sorcery, idolatry,

* Deus non vocis, sed cordis auditor est, sicut conspector.—Tertull. *de Orat.* § 13.

and other evils which proceed from the mind, but are accomplished by the labour of the hands. This is true purity, not merely what is external, about which many are careful, who have brought Jewish or heathenish superstition with them into Christianity. Our hands are pure enough, which we washed with our bodies once for all in Christ." (An allusion to baptism, which at time was performed by the immersion of the whole body. Probably Tertullian thought of John xiii. 10. His meaning is: since we are once for all purified through regeneration by faith in the Redeemer, nothing can defile us, if we only faithfully guard the purification we have received.) Of all such vain usages, which were not learnt from the teaching of the Lord and his apostles, he says: "Such affected practices belong not to religion, but to superstition; they are the signs rather of a barren service taken up with outward things, than of a rational devotion. We ought to stand aloof from such things, for they make us like the heathen." Elsewhere he says: "The faithful observance of the teachings of Christ paves the way to heaven for our prayers, and it is most important that if we have been at variance with our brethren, or injured them, we should not approach God's altar before we are reconciled to them. For what can that mean, to come to the peace of God without peace? To seek forgiveness of sins when we withhold it from others? How can he be reconciled to his Father who is angry with his brother? And the posture of prayer must be free, not only from wrath, but from all perturbation of mind, so that it may come from a spirit that resembles the Spirit to whom it is offered. The Holy Spirit cannot recognize an impure spirit, nor the spirit of joy a melancholy spirit, nor the free spirit a spirit entangled with worldly cares; no one receives into his society one who is hostile to him; every one admits only persons with friendly feelings to his communion." Cyprian says: "The Lord teaches us to pray in quiet, in our chamber, for we know that God is omnipresent; he sees and hears all things; he penetrates the most obscure corner with the fulness of his majesty; God hears not the voice, but the heart. When we pray, our whole heart must be directed to the prayer. It should be closed to the adversary, and open to God alone; for the former frequently creeps in, and by his deceptions draws

away our prayer from God, so that we have one thing in our hearts, and another in our mouths; for we must pray to the Lord with an upright disposition, not with the sound of the voice, but with the soul and the feelings. Christ teaches us to pray, '*Our* Father,' not '*my* Father.' Each Christian must not pray for himself alone. Ours is a common prayer. We pray not merely for individuals, but for the whole church; because, as the church is one, we are one with it. It is God's will that one should pray for all, even as he permitted one to bear the sins of all."

Especially were Christians convinced that prayer should be connected with the reading of the Scriptures, in order to enter rightly into its meaning. When Origen was exhorting one of his disciples, afterwards known as the illustrious Gregory Thaumaturgus, to the diligent study of the Scriptures, he added, "It is not enough for thee to seek and knock; prayer is most necessary in order to understand divine things. When our Lord excited us to this, he said not only, 'Knock and it shall be opened to you, seek and ye shall find,' but also, 'Ask and it shall be given you.' "

CHAPTER IX.

FASTING JOINED WITH PRAYER.

It was certainly the aim of the Christian development, that the whole life should be one continuous prayer,—that it should commence with a surrender of the heart to God, and that every action should be only an illustration of this grand fundamental principle. But though the entrance into the manifold engagements of life, into the variety of worldly things, as might be required by the activity of an ardent love for the kingdom of God, was not inconsistent with the tendency of the soul towards the one great object, yet human infirmity occasioned the entrance of contrarieties, interruptions, and fluctuations. The soul, in its occupation with the things of the world, cannot always persist in the

same undeviating tendency towards God, in the same attitude of prayer. Hence, in order that the fountain of the divine life may not fail, that the inner man may not be a prey to distraction, intervals were set apart for intercourse with God, when the soul might collect its scattered powers in devotion, and thus a consecration and refreshment might be diffused over the rest of life, which was taken up by worldly affairs.

Thus while Christians considered prayer as the daily nourishment of their hearts and souls, as the daily consecration of their lives; still they had, each one according to his peculiar situation and necessities, certain times when they retired from the confusion of worldly affairs, collected themselves in silence before God, examined the course of their lives, as in his sight and according to the directions of his word, repented of the evil which they detected in their inward and outward life, and with contrite hearts implored forgiveness and sanctification in the name of Christ.

The custom of connecting times of prayer and fasting with one another was not peculiarly Christian, but usual among the Jews, and hence probably was adopted by Christian churches. The mention of prayer and fasting in close connection in Matt. xvii. 21, appears designed to indicate devout, earnest prayer. When the Pharisees expressed their astonishment that Christ did not accustom his disciples to prayer and fasting, he declared that the joy which they experienced in intercourse with himself precluded fasting, as it was to them a season of festivity. But the sorrow occasioned by their separation from him would, of itself, induce them to fast. Yet the pain of separation from him would be only transitory, and would be followed by a perfect and enduring joy in the consciousness of an indissoluble spiritual communion with the glorified Christ. And this ever-enduring festive joy must exclude all fasting; therefore, the only fasting that could be practised, would be the involuntary expression of pain in some transitory states of the inner life, when the consciousness of redemption momentarily retires before the feeling of contrition in estrangement from God; or we must understand these fasts of such abstinence as was laid on the apostles by the duties of their calling, and to which they were induced to submit with joy through the power of the Spirit that animated them. (Matt. ix. 15;

Luke v. 35.) From what is contained in those words of our Lord, a correct rule may easily be drawn for all fasts on the Christian stand-point. But at that time, men followed in these things an indistinct tradition of the church, and a feeling not always certain and purely Christian, instead of forgetting everything else, and examining impartially the meaning of Christ's words, and thence deducing a rule of universal adaptation. Those words of Christ were so misunderstood, that the necessity of celebrating the remembrance of the sufferings of Christ by a fast, was deduced from them, and thus the foundation was laid of ecclesiastical fasts.

When individual Christians, therefore, by their peculiar necessities or disposition, felt impelled to appoint for themselves such a day of penitence and fasting, they were accustomed to refrain from food during a certain part of it, perhaps till three o'clock in the afternoon, or only to take a very scanty portion in the course of the day; but what they saved by their abstinence on such days, they applied to the relief of the poor. Friday was particularly set apart for this purpose, in order that the recollection of the redemptive sufferings of Christ might contribute to awaken the feelings of genuine penitence. Christ, crucified and risen, formed the central point of the whole Christian life, in the two-fold reference to that ancient stand-point from which it was freed, and from which it was to be increasingly freed, while it was attracted and fixed even more firmly to the new stand-point; with Christ the crucified to die to sin, to self, and to the world; to follow him in penitence and the crucifixion of the old man; and with Christ the risen, to rise to a new divine life consecrated to him in his communion.

To this view the most ancient church-festivals corresponded. In accordance with it, as Friday was the day set apart for penitence and fasting, so Sunday, being devoted to the commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, was exempt from all fasts, and from everything which bore the marks of sorrow. The joy of the new divine life, proceeding from communion with the risen Saviour, was to be impressed on all the transactions of that day. On Sunday, instead of kneeling, an upright posture was adopted, as more expressive of the joyful feeling that Christ had raised fallen man to heaven. On the same grounds one Friday in the year was especially chosen as

the day of fasting and penitence, in commemoration of the sufferings of Christ, which was extended still further, as a preparation for the joyful celebration of the resurrection. And thus one Sunday in the year was appointed to commemorate the risen Saviour, and the whole seven weeks from that day formed a continuous Pentecostal feast, dedicated to the commemoration of the operations of the glorified Saviour, until the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Hence the whole of this period was at first kept as a Sunday.

But what was here exhibited by particular feasts, was only that which was always present to the consciousness of the true Christian, to penetrate and animate his whole life. In reference to this, Origen says: "The perfect Christian, who always is familiar with such thoughts and words and works, which correspond to the Saviour's person and work, always celebrates the day of the Lord. Whoever is penetrated by the consciousness that Christ, as our Passover, has been sacrificed for us, and that he must celebrate the true Passover by eating his flesh, he always celebrates the Passover, since he always hastens on with his thoughts, words, and actions, from the things of the world to God and his own city. And whoever can in truth say, 'We are risen with Christ,' and 'he hath raised us together with him, and placed us in heavenly places in Christ Jesus,' such a man enjoys a constant Whitsuntide."

CHAPTER X.

TRUE AND FALSE ASCETICISM.

What by most persons, according to the peculiar necessities of the inner life and special states of mind, was applied only to certain times set apart from the rest of life, was extended by others to the whole of their lives, after they had been received into Christian communion by baptism. As their life hitherto, in heathenism, had been sunk in worldliness and given up to the service of sinful lusts, the ardour of attachment with which

they were now inspired for divine things would more readily show itself in an unsparing opposition to the world in which they had formerly sought their highest good. The glow of their first love would easily hurry them on to overstep the proper limits, to reject at once all earthly good, instead of appropriating and employing for the service of the kingdom of God (to which everything ought to be devoted) what had hitherto been employed in the service of sin. It was in reference to this fidelity in the management of earthly good for the kingdom of God that our Lord said (Luke xvi. 22), "If ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who shall give you that which is your own?" (the heavenly good corresponding to the higher nature of man in contrast to the earthly). Thus it came to pass that many, impelled by the glow of their first love, after their baptism surrendered their property to the poor, renounced all earthly enjoyments, and remained single to avoid the distraction of family cares, that they might be occupied only with divine things and live for the advancement of the kingdom of God; they continued to submit through their whole lives to these deprivations and meagre fare with a two-fold object,—to be less disturbed by the excitements of sensuality, and to employ for the benefit of the poor what they thus saved by spare living out of the gains of their manual labour. The persons, who from their striving to form themselves to Christian virtue, were called Ascetics (ἀσκηταί), or, by a metaphor taken from military affairs, Christian combatants (ἀγωνιστικοι), or the Abstinent (*continentes*), did not separate themselves from the rest of the Church. They lived in their midst, and employed the spiritual experiences which they had gained in their quiet meditations for the advantage of others, communicating to them the treasures they had won by intercourse with God in prayer, and by the diligent study of his Word. Among the heathen also, were men who led a life of similar abstinence and who when they appeared in the philosopher's cloak (τρίβων, *pallium*) were treated with great respect. Christians who now went about in this garb, as Ascetics, were able by that means to draw the attention of the heathen to the new philosophy brought from the East, and thus gained an opportunity of declaring the gospel to them.

Around such a person, appearing in the philosopher's

cloak, a number of men eager for knowledge and seeking truth, or fond of novelty, would soon collect. He was regarded as an enlightened sage, and as a rigid moral censor he was allowed to attack public vices. Whoever met him in his solitary walks, he entered into conversation with him, and thus availed himself of many opportunities for publishing the gospel. "Rejoice, O Philosopher's Cloak," exclaims Tertullian, "a better philosophy has done thee the honour to cover itself with thee since thou hast begun to be the garb of a Christian!"

This mode of life, in which opposition to the world was exhibited by such outward signs, was therefore in itself not peculiar to Christianity, and in itself was not suited to represent its peculiar nature, since this does not consist in mere outward contrariety to the world but in an internal conflict with it, to issue in the appropriation of the world with all worldly things for the representation of the kingdom of God. Hence the stand-point that preceded Christianity, in which the consciousness of disunion prevailed, when reconciliation to God was not yet effected, and all things were not yet pure to the pure, had for its characteristics such an outward contrariety to the world and such an avoidance of the world appearing as impure, as may be seen in the religions of the ancient East. This one-sided ascetic tendency often stood in connection with a style of thinking opposed to Christianity, which regarded what was material or sensuous as the ground and principle of evil, and hence prescribed the renunciation of every indulgence of the senses as the true way to perfection, and a high-mindedness which seduced men into the notion that by divesting themselves of what is human, by mortifying the senses by means of the preponderance of the mind, they would be able to seize on the divine life which grace only imparts to those who humbly long for it. Christianity from the first decidedly opposed this one-sided ascetic tendency, since it turned men's thoughts in self-examination from the outward to the inward, and taught them to find the ground of evil not in anything external, not in nature, not in the objects of sense, but in a selfishness that set itself in contrariety to the divine law. And hence it led to the consciousness that the evil which had its seat in the deeply rooted self-love, manifests itself in the form of spiritual pride

and of vanity, corrupting the movements of the higher life not less than in the more palpable outbreaks of coarse sensuality. Thus the Apostle Paul reprobates such an ascetic tendency, which existed in the Church at Colosse and would have mixed itself with Christianity, as nothing better than a "being puffed up with a fleshly mind." (Col. ii. 18.) Christianity deduced the disunion between sensuousness and spirit from sin, and recognised its removal in Christ; in the original type of his holy humanity, a sensuous nature penetrated throughout by the divine life, and serving it as a pure form of revelation, was to be seen, when he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh and condemned sin, and made it appear inoperative in the flesh over which it had hitherto exercised despotic power. Through Christianity the destiny of the body was manifested, that when freed from the yoke of sin, as in Christ, it was to be the organ of a sanctified soul, a temple of the Holy Spirit, as at a future period the glorified body will be raised from the dead to be the receptacle of a perfectly holy soul. And thus the contempt of the body and the mortifying of the flesh (Col. ii. 23) can find no point of attachment to Christianity rightly understood, and viewed in the connection of all its truths. Only in its predominant moral earnestness and more spiritual tendency, Christianity agreed with that asceticism; and it could certainly more easily attach itself to that than to a longing for sensual enjoyment. But that which distinguished Christianity from the other stand-points of religious and moral development, was the spirit of active love pervading all the relations of life, the humble and unperverted childlike disposition, the state of mind which, from the consciousness of redemption, banished all gloom and rejoiced in the Lord evermore. We must always distinguish between what was the transition-point in the development of the Christian life on an earlier standpoint, and what is founded in the nature of the Christian life itself—how the latter has overcome the obstacles that surrounded it. We may apply to such a practical point of the Christian development, what Zinzendorf said to a nobleman, who in answer to his requiring him to imitate Christ, said, "One must not hang down the head." Zinzendorf rejoined, "My head stands tolerably straight; but when a

man comes to Christ for the forgiveness of sins, he must first of all for some time hang down his head."

When that which ought to be only transitory is retained as something permanent, as an end of development and as essential to Christian perfection, it cannot fail to be injurious to practical Christianity; but we may also notice, as soon as traces of this injurious influence appear, a reaction of the original Christian spirit against it. True acceptable fasting, it is said in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, a production of at least the first half of the second century, "is not outward fasting," but "before all things, take care to fast from every evil word and evil report; and purify thy heart from all pollution, and remembrance of wrongs, and covetousness. On the day when thou fastest, be content with bread, and vegetables, and water, giving thanks to God; and, reckoning the expense of the dinner which thou wouldst otherwise eat, give it to a widow, or to an orphan, or to some needy person."

Clement of Alexandria, speaking against the austerities of certain sects, says that there were many kinds of priests in various heathenish religions, who practised celibacy and the strictest abstinence.* As humility is shown by gentleness, but not by mortification of the body, so also is continence a virtue of the soul, having its seat not outward but within. These highminded people say that they imitate the Lord, who was not married, nor had any worldly possessions; but the Holy Scriptures call to them, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." (1 Peter v. 5.) With the same view Clement wrote a treatise on the question, "Who is the rich man who will be saved?" in which he endeavours to show that the outward was in itself a matter of indifference as regards the salvation of the soul—that all depends on the disposition with which man either uses or abuses it—that riches in themselves are not hurtful, but only the love of

* Ὡς δὲ ἡ ταπεινοφροσύνη πρᾳότης ἐστὶν, οὐχὶ δὲ κακουχία σώματος· οὕτω καὶ ἡ ἐγκράτεια ψυχῆς ἀρετὴ, ἡ οὐκ ἐν φανερῷ, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ. Εἰσίν θ' οἱ πορνείαν ἀντικρυς τὸν γάμον λέγουσι καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου ταύτην παραδίδοσθαι δογματίζουσι· μιμεῖσθαι δ' αὐτοὺς οἱ μεγάλαυχοί φασι τὸν κύριον, μήτε γήμαντα, μήτε τι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ κτησάμενον· μᾶλλον παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλους νενοηκέναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καυχώμενοι. Λέγει δὲ αὐτοῖς ἡ γραφή. Ὑπερηφάνοις ὁ Θεὸς ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσι χάριν.—Clem. *Strom.* III. 446. (Pott. 533.)

earthly good—that poverty in itself is not praiseworthy, but only the renunciation of the earthly by the heart. When the enthusiasts of the Montanist sect, of whom we have spoken above, wished to prescribe regular fasts at certain times, many protested against them, and said that it was accordant with evangelical freedom that no positive law should be laid down on such points—that here every one is free to act according to his own necessities, circumstances, and inclination. They appealed to Isaiah lviii. 5, 6, &c., "that not fasts but works of righteousness were well-pleasing to God." (Matt. xv. 11; 1 Tim. iv. 1, &c.; 1 Cor. viii. 8.)

In the bloody persecution which befel the Church at Lyons in the year 177, a person named Alcibiades, who had hitherto lived as an ascetic, having stedfastly adhered to his Christian profession, was put in close confinement. Here he continued his former abstemious diet, living on bread and water, and probably not tasting the food which the Christians sent to their brethren in prison. But one of his fellow-prisoners, Attalus, told him that he was moved by the Divine Spirit to charge him with acting wrong in not enjoying God's gifts, and thereby being a stumbling-block to others. The ascetic and revered confessor, instead of feeling his spiritual vanity wounded, gave an example of the renunciation of self-will, a thing far nobler and more difficult than all outward asceticism. He now eat indifferently of whatever was set before him, and gave God thanks for these gifts also.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PRACTICAL BROTHERLY LOVE OF CHRISTIANS.

As our Lord declared brotherly-love to be the special mark by which mankind would recognise his disciples, so we find it strikingly manifested among the first Christians, who employed the term *brother*, as a common appellation of each other. Of this mutual affection the kiss of charity testified which was practised at the celebration of the supper every Sunday, and at those love-feasts (the *agapæ*), which were held in the primitive age, when Christians of all classes, for-

getting the differences of station, property, and education, met together, and the rich partook with the poor. On these occasions Christians assembled as if forming one family. As the Lord sanctified the meals which he partook of with his disciples, by his presence and communion, so likewise these feasts, kept in brotherly love, were sanctified by the presence of the Lord and spiritual communion with him; everything earthly became transformed into the heavenly; the ultimate object of all Christian association was here prefigured. Let us listen to Tertullian's description of such a love-feast at the end of the second century, "No one sits down at the table," he says, "till prayer has been offered to God. We eat as much as hunger requires; we drink no more than is consistent with sobriety; we satisfy our appetites as those who recollect that the night is to be spent in devotion; we converse as men who bear in mind that God hears them. After the persons present have washed their hands, lights are brought in, and every one is required to sing before all to the praise of God, either something taken from Holy Writ, or what his own heart has suggested; this shows how he has drunk. The feast concludes with prayer."

Christians also regarded themselves as standing in this brotherly relation to one another under all the circumstances of life; the temporal and spiritual wants of every individual were cared for by the Church. A Christian coming from distant parts, on his arrival in a foreign town, sought out the assembly of Christians, and found there spiritual and bodily refreshment. But partly because this brotherly love was abused by impostors, the Christian churches adopted a precautionary measure to receive no stranger who did not bring with him a regular testimonial (*epistola formata*) from the bishop of the church to which he belonged.

This cordial brotherly love of the Christians struck the heathen with astonishment; and people whose suspicions went no further than temporal ends, regarded it with a jealous eye. "See," they said, "how the Christians love one another, and are ready to die for one another." Tertullian,* in noticing

* Sed ejusmodi vel maxime dilectionis operatio notam nobis incerit penes quosdam. Vide, inquirent, ut invicem se diligant; ipsi enim invicem oderunt; et ut pro alterutro mori sint parati; ipsi enim ad occidendum alterutrum paratiores erunt. Sed et quod fratrum appellatione

the surprise of the heathen on this subject, says, "We are even your brethren by right of our common mother; the same human nature, although, like unnatural brethren, ye deny us the common human nature. But with how greater right must they call and consider themselves brethren who acknowledge God as their Father, who have received the same spirit of sanctification, and have been raised from the same abyss of ignorance to an admiration of the same light of truth. We who are of one heart and one soul, cannot have the least hesitation to have earthly goods in common."

At every weekly service of the Christians in some places, at every monthly meeting in other places, collections were made to which every member contributed according to his ability for the relief of the poor, the sick, the infirm through age, widows, and strangers who on account of their faith were imprisoned or sentenced to work in the mines. In many extraordinary cases the bishops made special collections for these objects in their congregations. Individual churches not merely cared for the wants of their own members, but the richer churches of the capital cities, such as Rome, sent pecuniary aid to those who were suffering for the faith, even to the remotest parts. And when the poor churches of the provincial towns were not in a condition to give sufficient relief to their suffering brethren from their own resources, they sought the help of the church in the larger cities. About the middle of the third century, it happened that in Numidia, in North Africa, several Christian men and women were taken captive by their barbarian neighbours. The Numidian churches not being able to raise the sum required for their ransom, applied to the metropolis, Carthage. The bishop of this city, Cyprian, in a short time collected from the clergy and laity a sum exceeding four thousand dollars, and remitted it to the bishops of those churches, with an epistle in which

censemur non alias opinor infamant, quam quod apud ipsas omne sanguines nomen de affectione simulatum est. Fratres autem etiam vestri sumus, jure naturæ matris unius, etsi vos parum homines, quia mali fratres. At quanto dignius fratres et dicuntur et habentur, qui unum Patrem Deum agnoverunt, qui unum spiritum biberunt sanctitatis, qui de uno utero ignorantiæ ejusdem ad unam lucem expaverunt veritatis. . . . . Itaque qui animo, animaque miscemur, nihil de rei communicatione dubitamus.—Tertull. *Apol.* § 39.

he says, "We cannot regard the imprisonment of our brethren but as our own, nor their sufferings but as ours, since we are united with them in one body, and not only love, but a peculiar religious interest must impel and confirm us in procuring the freedom of brethren who are members of our body. For the apostle says, 'Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' (1 Cor. iii. 16); therefore if love were not sufficient to impel us to help our brethren, we ought to reflect that the temples of God are in captivity, and these temples of God must not remain in it any longer through our delay; we must with all our might seek by our obedience to gain the approbation of Christ our judge, our Lord and God. For the Apostle Paul says, 'As many of you as are baptized have put on Christ:' therefore in our captive brethren we must see that Christ who has rescued us from the danger of captivity, who has redeemed us from the danger of death. We must feel ourselves compelled to free them from the hands of barbarians who has freed us from Satan's grasp, and who now dwells and abides in us; we must with a small sum of money ransom Him who has ransomed us by his cross and blood, and who has permitted this misfortune to happen, in order to prove our faith, whether every one of us will do for others what he would have wished for himself, had he fallen into the hands of barbarians." He adds, "We wish, indeed, that nothing like this may happen in future; but yet should any thing of the kind occur again to try the love of our hearts, and to test our faith, do not delay to inform us of it by another epistle; since you may be satisfied that our whole church prays to God that it may not happen again, but if it should occur, that they will help you cheerfully and abundantly."

CHAPTER XII.

GENERAL PHILANTHROPY OF CHRISTIANS.

Although the heathen frequently charged the Christians with misanthropy, because they would not imitate the conduct of the world, and sometimes because they showed some

semblance of it by a too rude but easily explicable opposition to the world, arising from the state of the development of the Christian life at that period, yet the principle of the universal love of mankind and of enemies was always expressed by the Christian church. The love of enemies especially was not regarded as a single moral precept of Christianity, but was a necessary result of the total Christian faith and consciousness, of faith in the Redeemer, who died for his enemies, and of a love that expelled everything selfish. Whenever they met for worship Christians prayed for the conversion of all men, that all men might attain salvation by the reception and faithful following of the doctrine of Christ. Also the heathen poor received rich gifts from the Christian church. When a narrow-hearted patriotism, which often was only a more refined and diffused selfishness, had suppressed among the ancients the general feelings of humanity, and many noble persons among the Romans helped to furnish those cruel spectacles of a bloodthirsty people—the gladiatorial shows—the voice of the Christian church was from the first raised against them with the greatest abhorrence. Whoever frequented those spectacles was excluded from the communion of the church.

In the year 254 a desolating epidemic raged throughout a great part of the Roman empire, and especially in Northern Africa. The heathen at Carthage did not venture to attend the sick for fear of infection; the infected were thrown out into the streets, half dead. Corpses were left lying in heaps, and threatened a general plague, by tainting the atmosphere. A short time before, the Christians had suffered a bloody persecution; and even this desolating epidemic occasioned new attacks upon them, as if the gods in their wrath had made such judgments depend on their enemies, the Christians. But Cyprian knew that it became Christians, by well-doing, to heap the burning coals of shame on the heads of their enemies. He assembled his church, and said to them, "If we merely show kindness to our own people, we do no more than publicans and heathens; as genuine Christians we must overcome evil by good, love our enemies as our Lord exhorts us, and pray for our persecutors. Since we are born of God, we must show ourselves worthy of our origin by imitating our Father's goodness."

The Christians answered this appeal by dividing the work among them according to their various situations and abilities. Some gave money, others their personal labour, and in a short time the dead received burial, and Carthage was rescued from the danger of a general pestilence.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHRISTIANS UNDER PERSECUTION.

It is indeed no proof of the divine origin and truth of a conviction that it imparts power to contemn death; the apathy of stupidity, or an artificial suppression of natural feeling, can do this. The intoxication of fanaticism, which does not allow men to reflect, but hurries them blindly on in a state of insensibility, may produce such an effect. Moreover, the nature of man, as partaking of the divine, is susceptible of an enthusiasm for the objects of a higher world; and this susceptibility may be led astray by deceptive influences. But fanaticism, like all elevation of the mental powers proceeding from over-excitement, in its very nature is incapable of always keeping at the same height. It begins violently, and is only heated and roused by the opposition it meets with; but it gradually loses its elasticity; and this takes place sooner if it meets with no resistance from without, but is left for a while to itself. But we see Christianity conflicting for three centuries, and overcoming death with the same enthusiasm. After a long interval of rest, during which it certainly sank in some measure into careless security and indolent worldliness (as for the greater part of the time from Heliogabalus to Trajan Decius, 218–249, from Gallienus to the beginning of the Diocletian persecution, 268–303), yet we see Christianity enter with fresh power on the conflict, which only served to separate nominal Christians, who had found their way into the church in great numbers during

peaceful times, from those who felt the vital power of Christianity. Not only the most excruciating tortures by which it was attempted to extort a denial of their faith from Christians could not shake their stedfastness, supported as it was by divine power; nor even could the protracted sufferings of close imprisonment, with hunger and thirst, nor toilsome, difficult, unwonted labours in the mines, weary out a patience which was maintained by their faith. The representations also of benevolent magistrates to the effect that they might retain their peculiar faith, provided they performed the outward ceremonies prescribed by the laws—these representations, which were so adapted by their sophistry as they were agreeable to the flesh to pacify their consciences—and all the persuasions of dear friends and relatives, the entreaties and tears of beloved fathers, mothers, and children, could not turn the tender hearts of Christians from the path of obedience to the gospel; they endured the severest conflict, not only the conflict with the fear of death as presented to the senses, but that which is still more trying, the conflict with those tender and deeply-implanted feelings in the moral nature of man, which Christianity by no means suppresses, but, as it does in reference to all that is purely human, exalts, refines, and ennobles. They were victorious in this conflict, because the words of the Saviour were deeply impressed on their hearts: "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Fanaticism, like a paroxysm of fever, hurries men along, and does not allow the sense of human weakness to spring up. Trust in God's power—a peaceful, sober devotedness to God, with a sense of human weakness—fasting, watching, and praying, lest we fall into temptation—experiencing the truth of Christ's words, "*The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*," and by the Spirit of the glorified Son of Man overcoming the opposition of the weak flesh, to say with the Apostle Paul, "When I am weak, then am I strong;"—sentiments and thoughts like these were the characteristics of the Christian martyr, as will be apparent from the examples which will come under our notice. Tertullian contrasts that patient resignation which he delineates in a separate treatise as the soul of the Christian life, with that artificial equanimity which is founded on an unfeeling

stupidity. He thus represents this Christian virtue:* "She perfects martyrdom, she consoles the poor, she teaches moderation to the rich; she does not let the weak overstrain themselves, she does not consume the strength of the strong; she rejoices the believer, she allures the heathen, she makes the slave well-pleasing to his master, and his master to God; she is loved in a boy, is praised in a youth, is honoured in the aged, is beautiful in every sex, in every age. Let us try to form an image of her. Her countenance is tranquil and placid; her forehead smooth, and marked by no wrinkles of sorrow or anger; her eyebrows cheerfully unknit; her eyes directed downwards in humility, not in grief; a complexion such as belongs to the unanxious and the innocent. . . . . Where God is, there is his foster-daughter. Wherever, therefore, the Spirit of God descends, this divine patience is his inseparable companion. Can the Spirit abide where she does not at the same time find admission? Without his companion and handmaid he will always and everywhere be grieved. This is the nature, these are the acts of heavenly and genuine, that is, of Christian patience."

There were some persons who, carried away by the ardour of their zeal for the profession of the gospel, declared themselves to be Christians voluntarily before the heathen magis-

* [Patientia] fidem munit, pacem gubernat, dilectionem adjuvat, humilitatem instruit, pœnitentiam exspectat, exomologesin assignat, carnem regit, spiritum servat, linguam frenat, manum continet, tentationes inculcat, scandala pellit, martyria consummat, pauperem consolatur, divitem temperat, infirmum non extendit, valentem non consumit, fidelem delectat, gentilem invitat; servum domino, dominum Deo commendat, feminam exornat, virum approbat; amatur in puero, laudatur in juvene, suspicitur in sene; in omni sexu, in omni ætate formosa est. Age jam sis et effigiem habitumque ejus comprehendamus. Vultis illi tranquillus et placidus frons pura, nulla mœroris aut iræ rugositate contracta; remissa æque in lætum modum supercilia, oculis humilitate, non infelicitate dejectis; os taciturnitatis honore signatum; color qualis securis et innoxiis; motus frequens capitis in diabolum et minax visus; cæterum amictus circum pectora candidus, et corpori impressus, ut qui nec inflatur nec inquietatur. Sedet enim in throno spiritus ejus mitissimi et mansuetissimi, qui non turbine glomeratur, non nubilo livet, sed est teneræ severitatis, apertus et simplex, quem tertio vidit Helias. Nam ubi Deus, ibidem et alumna ejus, patientia scilicet. Cum ergo Spiritus Dei descendit, individua patientia comitatur eum.—Tertull. *de Patientia*, § 15.

trates, and thus gave themselves up to death. But the Lord's injunction in Matt. x. 23, with his own example, and that of his apostles, served to check the spread of such an enthusiastic excitement. The Christian church in general always repudiated this voluntary surrender to death as a proceeding not in accordance with the gospel—a perverse self-confidence, a want of devout humility. In an epistle from the Church at Smyrna, containing an account of the persecution in A.D. 161, in which Bishop Polycarp suffered martyrdom, mention is made of a person who gave himself up in this manner, but afterwards—(a natural consequence of his bold self-confidence, and of a zeal more carnal than godly)—did not maintain his stedfastness. "On this account," they say, "we do not praise those who surrender themselves, for such is not the lesson of the gospel." Clement of Alexandria says, that genuine Christians, if they truly call on God, surrender themselves joyfully to his will, and verify the call of God, by being conscious of no rashness. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who, by his own martyrdom at a later period, proved that he did not flee from fear of death, withdrew at the beginning of the Decian persecution for some time from his church, in order to secure rest for them, and not to excite the wrath of the heathen to a higher degree by his presence. And his anxiety for his church during his absence not only related to their continuing stedfast in the faith, but to their observance of Christian moderation and order, that nothing fanatical might mingle with the zeal of the church. On this account, he ordained that the clergy who visited the confessors in their imprisonment, and administered to them the Lord's Supper, should go alternately in order to excite no suspicion in the minds of the heathen; that the Christians should not go in crowds to their imprisoned brethren, to which the fire of love impelled them, lest by being too eager to gain everything, they should lose all. "We must in all things," so he wrote to one of his clergy, "be gentle and humble, as becomes the servants of God, to adapt ourselves to the times, and to be solicitous for quiet." He was very much displeased when those who for confessing themselves had been sentenced to banishment, afterwards of their own accord came back to their own country; because when they were taken and condemned to death, "they suffered not as

Christians, but as criminals." In his last letter, when in prospect of death, he wrote thus to his church: "Conformably to the doctrine you have received from me according to the injunction of the Lord, dearest brethren, maintain quiet, and let no one of you excite dissension among the brethren, or voluntarily give himself up to the heathen. When he is taken and delivered up, then he must speak; for in that hour the Lord that dwelleth in us speaks by our mouth."

We would now adduce some individual instances, to illustrate the power of Christian enthusiasm and Christian faith in times of persecution.

Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, now ninety years of age, after having done his utmost to retain his church around him, obeyed the call of the Lord which he had continually before his eyes. "The will of the Lord be done," he said, "since my persecutors are coming." He received them with a cheerfulness and mildness such as became the confessor of a meek and humble Lord. He prepared himself for his last journey, by praying for two hours with such fervency that the hearts of the heathen spectators were deeply moved. He addressed the magistrate respectfully, for though a heathen he regarded him as a "minister of God," and expressed his readiness to render an account of his faith. But with all his humility, he showed undaunted resolution to do nothing against his conscience. With the repugnance of a simple childlike love, he rejected the proposal to blaspheme his Lord, in order to save his life. "How can I blaspheme him, my Lord and Saviour? eighty and six years I have served him, and he has never injured me; how can I blaspheme my King who saves me?" He did not seek death in presumptuous self-confidence; but when his Lord called him, he knew that He who called him would also give him power to endure the fire, and to stand unmoved in the flames.

The persecution under the Emperor Valerian against the Christian church in the year 257, furnishes examples of many excellent bishops, who with paternal anxiety for their flocks, from whom no power on earth could separate these faithful shepherds, met death with Christian tranquillity and presence of mind. As it is common with men in the delusion of their imaginary wisdom to make no distinction between what is effected by divine power, and what results only from human

agency, and hence they fancy that by their contrivances they can destroy a work which, proceeding from the power of God, rests on an immoveable basis, though not visible to the eye of the unenlightened man,—so this emperor thought he had devised a plan for gradually overthrowing the Christian church. He conceived that the propagation and spread of the new religion was mainly attributable to the reputation, zeal, and activity of the clergy, particularly the bishops. If he succeeded in inducing the bishops to abjure their faith, and return to the state-religion, their example would no doubt have a great influence on the people, who are always actuated more by a regard to authority than by firm independent conviction. If he were unsuccessful, it would be only necessary to banish the refractory bishops from their flocks, and the latter being deprived of their overseers and teachers, would easily waver in their faith, and be brought back to the observance of the state-religion. According to this plan, he issued his orders to the governors in the provinces of the Roman empire, to summon the bishops before their tribunals. When Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, appeared for the first time before the proconsul, and was examined, he answered: "I am a Christian and a bishop. I know no God beside the one true God, who created heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is therein. This God we Christians serve. To Him we pray day and night for ourselves, for all men, and for the welfare of the emperors themselves." To the question of the proconsul, "Dost thou persist in this resolution?" he answered, "A resolution grounded on the knowledge of God is unchangeable." Being required to name his clergy, he replied: "Your laws wisely forbid the trade of informing; our religion forbids a man's giving himself up; but if you seek after them, you will find them." Cyprian, according to the imperial edict, was sentenced to banishment.

When Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, appeared before Æmilianus, the prefect of Egypt, and was required to worship the gods who protected the government of the emperor, he answered, "All men do not worship the same gods; each one worships those in whom he believes, according to his convictions. We worship the one God, creator of the universe, who also has intrusted the government to our emperor,

and to Him we continually pray for the tranquillity of his government." The prefect rejoined, "Now, what hinders you from worshipping this god, if he be really a god, together with your country's gods? The emperor only commands you to worship the gods, that is, the gods acknowledged by all men." The governor wished to impress upon him that he need not deny his religion, and yet might acknowledge the state-religion, the only point of importance; but the bishop would not allow his conscience to accept this evasion. He answered briefly, "We can worship no other." Dionysius was forthwith sentenced to banishment; his place of exile was Kephro, a remote district in Lybia, whither the gospel had not yet penetrated. To whatever spot they were banished, the bishops sought to propagate Christianity; they won the love of the inhabitants; they were frequently visited by members of their churches, with whom, though separated from them in body, they maintained a living union in spirit. Bishop Dionysius gives the following account of his banishment. "But they could not deprive us even of visible communion with the faithful in the Lord. I led the brethren in Alexandria so much more zealously to communion with one another; separated from them in body, but in spirit I was still with them, and a large congregation assembled at Kephro, whither many brethren followed me from the city, and many came from Egypt. Also in Kephro itself the Lord opened the door of the word. The first seed of the gospel was scattered by us there. And as if God had led us on that account to them in banishment, after we had fulfilled this call, he brought us away from that place." As Dionysius had good reason for saying, that though separated in body from his flock, he was with them in spirit, he gave proofs of it by sending letters to the church on the occasion of the festivals, by which he promoted their celebration, and bestowed his blessing upon them.

To the same period probably relates the pastoral epistle of one of the African bishops, when separated from his church, which is to be found in Cyprian's works, and begins thus: "What can be more salutary in the church of the Lord, what more suitable to the vocation of the bishop, than that believers should be led by his instructions in the divine doctrine to the kingdom of heaven? I wish even during my absence to dis-

charge this daily business of my calling, and by letter to make myself present among you. I endeavour by my wonted addresses to confirm you in the faith, in order that, being grounded in the gospel, you may always be armed against the attacks of Satan. I shall not believe that I am absent from you if I am safe in your recollection. And not only do we declare to you what we draw from the fountain of the Holy Scriptures, but we join with our word of instruction our prayer to the Lord, that he would open to us as well as to you the treasures of his holy truth, and give us strength to practise what we know."

When the emperor saw that he could not put the light under a bushel, so that it could not shine, he resolved to suppress it by force. All the bishops and teachers of Christian churches were sentenced to death. On the arrival at Carthage of the new proconsul sent from Rome, at the beginning of the following year 258, Cyprian was recalled, in order to receive the decision of his fate. He quietly awaited whatever might be the will of his heavenly Father at his country residence, which, in the ardour of his first love, he had sold in order to assist the poor with the money, but which the attachment of his church had restored to him. In the former persecution he had withdrawn because the interests of his church required it, and because he had hopes, that after the first fury of the persecution had subsided, his church might be preserved; but now, on the contrary, the entreaties of many friends, and even of men of note among the heathen, who offered him a retreat, could not induce him to decline that public confession which he believed the Lord had called him to make. But when he heard that he was to be taken to Utica, where the proconsul was then staying, that he might be executed there, he resolved to yield for a while to the advice of his friends, "since," as he said, "it was fitting that the bishop should confess the Lord before the church over which the Lord has placed him, in order by his confession to honour the whole church; for what the bishop utters at such a juncture by the inspiration of God, he utters as with the mouth of all."

Suddenly Cyprian was taken away by a guard dispatched by the proconsul; but as long as the proconsul remained in the country for relaxation, Cyprian was not examined nor

sentenced. He remained for the night in custody, and was treated kindly. A great part of the church, who had heard that their spiritual father was about to be executed, hastened to the spot, and passed the whole night around the house which contained their beloved pastor, so that nothing could happen to him without their knowledge. With the daily expectation of death before his eyes, he had no other anxiety than the welfare of his flock. As among the multitude there were many young females belonging to his church, he gave special charge that they should be taken care of, and that no injury should be done to their morals. The next morning, accompanied by a multitude of Christians and pagans, he was led to judgment. The place was at some distance, and as the proconsul had not yet arrived, he was allowed to retire to a solitary spot. Wearied with exertion, he lay down on a bench that happened to be there. A soldier who had apostatized from Christianity, offered out of love and reverence, and in order to ertain a sacred memorial of the martyr, dry clothes instead of his own, which were dripping with sweat. But Cyprian answered him, "Shall I be concerned to be free from discomfort, when perhaps to-morrow I shall feel nothing at all?" When at last he appeared before the proconsul, the latter said: "The majesty of the emperor requires thee to perform the ceremonies of our state-religion." Cyprian replied: "That I cannot do." The proconsul said: "Be careful of thy life." Cyprian answered: "Do what is prescribed to you. In so plain an affair, no further consideration is needed." When he received the sentence of death, he said: "God be praised." These were his last words.

In a violent persecution against the Christians in the year 202, under the emperor Septimius Severus, amongst several others, a young woman, only two-and-twenty years old, Perpetua, was arrested. Her aged father, a heathen, immediately came to her, and with the tenderest affection, entreated her to renounce Christianity in order to save her life. After he had talked to her for a long time, she said to him, with child-like simplicity, "Dost thou see that pitcher lying on the ground?" "Yes," said he. "Now," she asked him, "can I call that vessel by any other name than what it is?" "No." "Neither can I call myself anything but what I

am—a Christian." When the report reached her father that her trial was coming on, he hastened, full of sorrow, to the prison, and said: "Dear daughter, have pity on my grey hairs. Have pity on thy father, if thou thinkest I deserve to be called thy father; if with these hands I have brought thee up to this blooming age; if I have preferred thee to all thy brothers, do not bring disgrace and shame upon me among men. Look at thy brothers, thy mother, and thy aunt; thy son, too (an infant at the breast, whom to nourish in prison was her greatest solace), who when thou diest cannot long survive. Lay aside that high spirit, and do not plunge us all in ruin; for none of us will be able to speak freely if thou sufferest." With these words he kissed his hands, and threw himself weeping at her feet. "My father's grey hairs," said Perpetua, "pained me when I thought that he alone of all my family would not rejoice at my sufferings, and I sought to strengthen him by saying, 'When I appear before the tribunal, what will happen to me will be what God wills; for be assured we stand not in our own but in God's power.'" When she was brought with the other Christian prisoners to the judicial examination, and her turn was come, suddenly the father entered with the infant in his arms, showed it imploringly to the mother, and said: "Have pity on the child." The judge supported the father's prayer, and said: "Spare thy father's grey hairs; spare the tender age of thy child. Sacrifice for the welfare of the emperor." She answered, "I cannot do that." "Art thou a Christian?" said the judge; and she answered, "I am a Christian." When the father wished to urge her still more, the judge ordered him to be taken away by force. The soldiers struck him. "I am pained," said Perpetua, "his unfortunate old age pains me, as if I myself had been struck." Perpetua and her companions, three youths and another young married woman, were condemned to be thrown to the wild beasts, for the gratification of a cruel people in a fight of wild beasts, which was to be given on the birthday of the young prince Geta. The conduct of the Christian prisoners made a deep impression on Pudens, the soldier who guarded them (as in other instances the soldiers or jailers who attended the Christians to martyrdom had their minds powerfully drawn to Christianity as a supernatural power), and he felt him-

self compelled to acknowledge that here there was something divine. In consequence, he showed favour to the Christians, and allowed many of their brethren free access to them in the prison, who must otherwise have paid for the privilege of cheering each other by such intercourse. Shortly before the public spectacle the aged father came for the last time to his daughter, tore the hair of his beard, threw himself on the ground, and uttered, as his daughter expressed it, "words which must move any creature." But, however deeply affected, although so full of sympathy and pain, yet faith and love to the Redeemer gained the victory.

Perpetua's companion in suffering, Felicitas, was near her confinement, and had much to endure. A heathen slave said to her, "If now you suffer such pain, how will you feel when you are exposed to the wild beasts, which you made so light of when you refused to sacrifice?" She answered, "What I now suffer, I endure myself alone; but then another will be with me, who will suffer for me, because I also will suffer for Him."

A custom was still retained, belonging to that ancient form of idolatry which caused the blood of human victims to flow at its altars, that the persons condemned to die at these barbarous shows were devoted as an offering to Saturn. It was thought that if these Christians were thus devoted, it would be a greater triumph of the gods over Christianity, since their enemies would be made to do homage to them. It was, therefore, proposed to dress the men as priests of Saturn, and the women as priestesses of Ceres. But they firmly resisted this proposal, saying, "We are come here voluntarily, in order that our freedom may not be taken from us. We have given up our lives that we may not do anything of this kind; we have made these terms with you." The officers who had the charge of the execution, admitted the justice of this appeal and yielded to it. When Perpetua was already wounded, she called to her brother and a catechumen, who, in the time of suffering had performed many offices of Christian love for her, and said to them, "Stand fast in the faith and love one another, and indulge in no feelings of animosity on account of our sufferings." When one of the young men, Saturninus, had been mortally wounded by the bite of a leopard, he called to him the soldier above

mentioned, Pudens, and took farewell of him, saying, "Farewell! meditate on my faith, and let not this unsettle you, but rather confirm you in the faith;" at the same time he took a ring off his finger, dipped it in the blood that flowed from his wound, and gave it as a memento. Before the martyrs received the customary *coup de grâce*, they gave one another in the article of death the kiss of charity.

Under the Valerian persecution, the martyrs in Numidia wrote as follows, during a severe imprisonment, in which they suffered much from hunger and thirst: "The dark prison soon shone with the illumination of the Holy Spirit; we ascend to the place of punishment as if we were ascending to heaven. We cannot describe what days and nights we have spent there. We are not afraid to describe the horrors of that place, for the greater the trial so much greater must He be who has overcome it in us. And, indeed, it is not our conflict, for by the help of the Lord we have gained the victory; for to be put to death is easy for the servants of God, and death is nothing, because the Lord has taken away its sting and power; He triumphed over it on the cross."

We find examples of husbands exhorting their wives, wives their husbands, mothers their sons, and sons their fathers, to stedfastness in the faith, and gaining the victory over the natural human feelings. In the reign of the emperor Septimius Severus, when Leonides, father of the great doctor of the church, Origen, was thrown into prison at Alexandria, as a confessor of Christ, his son, then a youth of sixteen, was inflamed with the desire to confess his Redeemer before the heathen. The mother knew not how to keep him back, except by hiding his clothes, and thus obliging him to stay at home. He then wrote a letter to his father in prison, in which, among other things, he said: "Take care not to change your resolution on our account." Thus Origen, who already in his youth was distinguished by his zeal and power in the publication of the gospel, drew on himself the hatred of the fanatical populace. He was obliged to flee from one house to another, to escape the crowds of embittered heathen by whom he was waylaid. On one occasion they succeeded in laying hold of him, and dragged him to the temple of Serapis; having placed him on the steps, they put a palm-branch in his hands that he might present it, according to the

custom of the worshippers of that idol; but returning it into their hands, he said: "Receive not the palm of idols, but the palm of Christ."

In the Decian persecution a Christian, named Numidius, had animated many persons to martyrdom by his exhortations: he cheerfully beheld his wife burnt to death by his side; he himself, after being half burnt, was covered with stones and left for dead. His daughter searched for his body in order to bury it, and to her inexpressible joy was surprised to find some signs of life remaining in him. By her care he was restored, and afterwards laboured as a preacher of the gospel and the pastor of a church.

Certainly a confession given while under torture, or in sight of death, does not make a true Christian, if this confession does not proceed from the spirit of love, and is not in harmony with the whole life as a witness of the faith; for the Apostle Paul says: "If I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." Where watchfulness and sobermindedness are wanting, what would have been a victory of faith becomes a defeat. Thus it has sometimes happened, that those who had received power to despise death and torture for the Lord's sake, afterwards forgot that it was not their own power by which they had been victorious; through self-exaltation they were led away from the straight path of new obedience, and overpowered by temptations for which they were not prepared. Those who had been able to overcome the natural weakness of the flesh, and the natural fear of death, sometimes gave way to the movements of a secret and refined, but so much the more dangerous, self-love. But the teachers of the Church always remind Christians, that only when the testimony of the lips corresponds with the testimony of the life, the former can be of any value in God's sight. It was from a lively sense of the danger to which those persons were exposed who had gained such a victory of faith, that intelligent clergymen visited the confessors in their prisons, read the Holy Scriptures to them, imparted to them not only words of consolation but of warning, and came to their aid by administering suitable and scriptural advice.

"May they learn of you," so writes Cyprian to his clergy, "to be humble and peaceable, that they may preserve the

honour of their name; and may those who have glorified the Lord by their words, glorify himself also by their conduct. There remains something more than they have yet fulfilled, for it is written, 'Praise no man before his decease;' and our Lord says: 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved.' May they imitate the Lord who, in the time of his sufferings, appeared not more high-minded but more humble, for at that juncture he washed the feet of his disciples, and said: 'If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.' May they also follow the example of the Apostle Paul, who, after often suffering imprisonment and scourging, continued to be on all occasions gentle and humble, and even after being caught up to the third heaven and Paradise, indulged in no arrogance. And since only he that humbles himself will be exalted, so ought they now especially to fear the plots of their adversary, who, because he is conquered, is so much the more exasperated, and seeks to conquer the conquerors." To the confessors themselves he thus writes: "Still we are in the world; still we are on the battle-field; we fight for our daily life. Hence you must strive that, after such a beginning, you may make progress; that what you have so happily begun, may be brought to perfection. It is but little, if a man has been able only to obtain; it is something more to be able to keep what he has obtained, as even faith and regeneration cannot bring to eternal life, merely by being once received; they must be kept. Our Lord himself taught this when he said: 'Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.' (John v. 14.) In short, Solomon and Saul, and many others, could keep the grace vouchsafed to them as long as they walked in the ways of the Lord, but as soon as their obedience failed, grace failed. We must persist in the straight and narrow path of honour; gentleness and humility, a quiet and moral course of conduct, become all Christians, according to the words of the Lord, who regards none but the humble and meek, who receive his word with fear and trembling; and you, the confessors, are more than all bound to observe and fulfil all this, since you are examples for the rest of your brethren. Our Lord was 'led as a lamb to the slaughter; as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.' And can any one now who lives

through Him and in Him, be high-minded and boastful, unmindful of what he did, and of what he taught by his apostles? But if the servant is not greater than his lord, then must those who follow the Lord, be humble and peaceful, and tread in his footsteps quietly; for the more lowly any one is, the higher will he become, since the Lord says, 'Whoever is least among you all, he shall be great.'"

The genuine evangelical confessors manifested this disposition. The above-mentioned Numidian martyrs closed the account of their sufferings with these words: "Dear brethren, let us, with all our might, hold fast concord, peace, and union of heart. Let us strive to be now what we are to be in another world. If we wish to be and to reign with Christ, then we must act in the way which will lead to Christ and his kingdom." When afterwards they were led amidst a great concourse of Christians and Pagans to the place of execution, and the former cried out, "Think of us when you go to the Lord," one of the martyrs answered, humbly, "Rather may you think of me before the Lord."

A confessor at Rome during the Decian persecution, writing to a confessor at Carthage, in order to solicit the intercessory prayer of the African martyrs for his fallen sister, thus expresses himself: "I believe, if we do not see one another again in this world, we shall embrace one another in the future world before Christ. Pray for me, that I may be worthy to receive the martyr's crown in your kingdom. But be assured I have much to suffer, and I think as if you were with me, of your ancient love, by night and day. God alone knows it. Wherefore I pray you to fulfil my wish, and to mourn with me for the death of my sister, who in this desolation has fallen away from Christ; for she has sacrificed and offended the Lord, as appears evidently to us. On account of her transgression, I spend this joyful time of Easter in tears, both day and night."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SYMPATHY OF ALL CHRISTIANS IN THE SUFFERINGS OF THE CONFESSORS.

WHILE Christians took a lively interest in all their brethren, this was especially the case in reference to the confessors. Contributions were sent from remote districts for the relief of those who were in prison or labouring in the mines; delegates also came to visit them. A generous emulation was excited in affording them relief both for body and mind. The prison soon became converted into a church, owing to the numbers who assembled there to assist the sufferers by their prayers; and the bishops, as we have already observed, were under the necessity of trying to moderate the ill-regulated zeal of their people. Tertullian composed a small treatise for the encouragement of the confessors who suffered at Carthage under Septimius Severus, which begins thus: "Besides the means of bodily nourishment which your mother the church, from her stores, and individual brethren from their private resources, send to you in prison, receive from me something which may serve for the sustentation of your souls; for it is not good that the flesh should be replenished while the spirit is famished. If what is weak be cared for, surely the stronger ought not to be neglected. Yet I own I am not one who is worthy to address you. Nevertheless the most accomplished fencers are not only encouraged by their teachers, but also are animated by the cheers of the people." He then proceeds: "Especially do not grieve the Holy Spirit, who has entered the prison with you. For if He had not entered with you, you would not be here to-day. Hence, strive that He may abide with you here, and lead you hence to the Lord. The prison is also an abode of the Evil Spirit, where he assembles those who belong to him; but you are come to the prison for the very purpose of treading him underfoot in his own abode, which you have already done outside the prison. Might he not, therefore, say, Ye are in my kingdom; I will tempt you by low passions and dissensions. Let him flee your countenance, and retire to his own abyss, like a serpent

rendered harmless by enchantment. Nor let him succeed so well in his kingdom as to involve you in strife, but may he find you fortified against his attacks by concord; for to maintain peace among yourselves is to make war on him. The prison is darkness," he says, "but ye are light; it has fetters, but ye are free in God's sight. . . . . Compare life in the world and life in the prison, and see whether the spirit does not gain more in the prison than the flesh loses. But verily the flesh loses nothing that it absolutely needs, thanks to the care of the church and the love of the brethren; and over and above that, the spirit gains what is always useful for the faith. Thou seest no strange gods; thou dost not meet their images; thou partakest not of the festivals of the heathen by living among them; thou art not touched by the foul steam of their sacrifices; thou art not dinned by the shouts of the theatre, nor shocked by the cruelty and licentious passions of those who frequent it; thy eyes do not settle on the abodes of public voluptuousness. Thou art free from vexations and temptations, and even from persecution itself. . . . . Discard the name of prison, and call it retirement. Though the body is shut up, and the flesh detained, yet all things are open to the spirit. Walk about in spirit, and do not imagine that you are among shady groves and long porticoes, but in the way that leads to God. The limbs feel not the pressure of the stocks when the soul is in heaven. The soul leads the whole man with it, and transports it whither it will. Where thy heart is, there will thy treasure be also."

We may here quote the beautiful exhortation of Cyprian to an African church in a time of impending persecution:*

* Neque enim sic nomen militiæ dedimus, ut pacem tantummodo cogitare et detrectare et recusare militiam debeamus, quando in ipsa militia primus ambulaverit Dominus humilitatis et tolerantiæ et passionis magister, ut quod fieri docuit prior faceret, et quod pati hortatur prior pro nobis ipse pateretur. . . . Nec quisquam, fratres dilectissimi, cum populum nostrum fugari conspexerit metu persecutionis et spargi conturbetur, quod collectam fraternitatem non videat, nec tractantes episcopos audiat. Simul tunc omnes esse non possunt, quibus occidere non licet, sed occidi necesse est. Ubicunque in illis diebus unusquisque fratrum fuerit a grege interim necessitate temporis corpore non spiritu separatus, non moveatur ad fugæ illius horrorem, nec recedens et latens deserti loci solitudine terreatur. Solus non est, cui Christus in fuga comes

"Not in *that* sense have we joined the soldiers of the Lord—that we think of nothing but peace, and flee from conflict; since in the conflict the Lord has gone before us as the teacher of humility, patience, and suffering; since what he has taught us to accomplish he has himself accomplished; and what he exhorts us to suffer, he has first suffered for us. And let none of you, dear brethren, be disturbed when he sees our congregations dispersed by the fear of persecution; let no one be disturbed because he does not see the brethren assembled, nor hear the bishop preach. Christians, who may not shed the blood of others, but must rather be ready to shed their own, cannot at such a time meet together. Wherever it happens in these days that a brother is separated from the church awhile by the necessities of the times, but not in spirit, wherever he may betake himself to flight, or wherever he may be concealed, let him not be alarmed at the solitude of the place. *He* is not alone who has Christ for a companion of his flight. He is not alone who, preserving the temple of God, is not without God wherever he may be. And if the fugitive in solitude, or on the mountains, falls into the hands of robbers, or is torn by a wild beast, or if he loses his life by hunger, thirst, or cold, or is drowned in a storm at sea, still Christ everywhere sees his soldier engaged in the conflict; and wherever death may meet him, the Lord will give him the reward which he has promised to those who sacrifice their lives for the honour of his name. And it is no small honour of martyrdom when a man dies not publicly and among many, since he dies for Christ's sake. It is enough that *He* is a witness of his martyrdom who tries and crowns the martyrs."

est. Solus non est, qui templum Dei servans, ubicunque fuerit, sine Deo non est. Et si fugientem in solitudine ac montibus latro oppresserit, fera invaserit, fames aut sitis aut frigus afflixerit, vel per maria præcipiti navigatione properantem tempestas ac procella submerserit, spectat militem suum Christus ubicunque pugnantem, et persecutiones causa pro nominis sui honore morienti præmium reddit quod daturum se in resurrectione promisit. Nec minor est martyrii gloria non publice et inter multos perisse, cum pereundi causa sit propter Christum perire. Sufficit ad testimonium martyrii sui testis ille, qui probat martyres et coronat.—Cypr. *Ep.* 56 *ad Theberatanos.*

CHAPTER XV.

OCCUPATIONS PERMITTED OR FORBIDDEN AMONG CHRISTIANS.

It is evident from the passages already quoted from Tertullian's Apology, that all those employments or trades which involved nothing immoral or contradictory to the principles of Christianity were carried on by Christians. The rule given by the Apostle Paul was applicable here: "*Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.*" (1 Cor. vii. 20.) Christianity would only impart fresh fidelity in his calling. It would now be carried on in a new spirit and with a new disposition, as a trust from God—as something devoted and serviceable to the kingdom of God.

Thus every calling not in itself immoral (although by the manner in which it was commonly carried on it might be immoral) might be sanctified by Christianity—that which had hitherto been the abode of Satan might be transformed and exalted into a temple of God. Among the ancients nothing was in worse repute than that of a *caupo* or innkeeper; so that a word derived from it (*cauponari*) became a proverbial expression to designate dishonourable adulteration. But the innkeeper Theodotus, at Ancyra, in Galatia, who died as a martyr in the Diocletian persecution, showed how even such a trade might be made use of for the service of Christianity. His tavern became in that persecution a place of refuge for all persecuted Christians, where they received the means of support, and where the communion was celebrated with bread and wine at his expense. The biographer of this person compares this tavern to Noah's ark, on account of its being a safe rendezvous for all true Christians in this persecution.

But when any one abused that expression of the Apostle Paul by attaching to it a laxer meaning, in order to justify the carrying on of an occupation that was inconsistent with the principles of Christianity, Tertullian indignantly replied: "According to such an interpretation (in which no regard is paid to proper definition and limitation), we might all remain in sin; for there is no one among us who is not to

be regarded as a sinner; and Jesus Christ came on no other account than to deliver sinners." Whoever before his conversion to Christianity followed an occupation that pandered to vice, or was founded on deceit, or was in any way connected with heathen idolatry, was obliged to renounce the same before baptism. The church into which he entered then assisted him to begin a new occupation. Such trades were forbidden to Christians as that of a maker of idols. To the excuse sometimes made that making idols and worshipping them was not the same thing, Tertullian answered: "Verily thou dost worship them, who makest them that they may be worshipped. And thou worshippest them not with the spirit of any worthless savour of sacrifice, but with thine own; nor at the cost of the life of a beast, but of thy own life. To these thou offerest up thy mind; to these thou makest libations of thy sweat; in homage to these thou kindlest the light of the understanding." Moreover, it was considered unlawful to exercise the profession of an astrologer, a juggler, or a magician, which latter was at that time a very fruitful source of gain. Such was the effect of the publication of the gospel by the Apostle Paul at Ephesus, the ancient seat of such deceitful and curious arts, that those who practised them confessed their sins, and sacrificed to the gospel what had hitherto been so highly esteemed by them, and had been productive of such gain. It must have been well known among the heathen that Christianity counterworked these arts of darkness, since that famous Goët in Pontus, Alexander, whose life was written by Lucian, placed the Christians and the Epicureans in the same list as enemies of his jugglerie, and would never practise his art in their presence. Then there were stage-players (*histriones*), whose profession, as it then existed, appeared inconsistent with Christian seriousness and demeanour, and with the strictness of Christian morals. When in an African church a stage-player who had embraced Christianity continued to support himself as heretofore by training boys for the theatre, Cyprian declared that this ought not to be allowed, and added: "If such a person alleges poverty or necessity, he may be provided for among the rest whom the church supports, provided he will be content with a more moderate but more innocent maintenance. But he must not believe that he merits support on this account, because he has

given up a sinful habit, for by so doing he benefits not us, but himself. Seek, therefore, as thou only canst to call him back from this wicked and shameful life to the path of innocence, and to the hope of eternal life, that he may be satisfied with a spare but yet wholesome maintenance given him by the church. But if your church has not the ability to give support to those who are in want, then he must come to us, and receive as much as is necessary for food and clothing, that he may not teach injurious things to others who are out of the church, but learn himself in the church what will contribute to salvation."

Respecting military service the opinions of Christians were divided. That the opinion that this calling was not permissible for Christians was not universal, appears from the passage already cited from Tertullian, and from the story of the Thundering Legion (*legio fulminea*) under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius; for even if we are not disposed to admit that this story is founded on fact, yet its circulation among the Christians of that age shows that the existence of Christians in the army was not a novelty. Many other similar examples are also to be found; and from the treatises in which Tertullian controverts the lawfulness of the military profession for Christians, we see at the same time that another party vindicated it, and appealed to the directions which John the Baptist gave to the soldiers (Luke iii. 14), to the example of the believing centurion (Luke vii.), and to that of Cornelius. But others not only objected to the military service for Christians, that it brought with it many temptations to take a part in idolatrous ceremonies, but that it also appeared inconsistent with the priestly character of all Christians. "How shall the son of peace appear in the field of battle, whom it will not befit to go to law? Shall he administer bonds and imprisonment, and tortures and punishments, who may not avenge even his own injuries?" Certainly these scruples testify the tender conscientiousness of some Christians, and show how their souls were filled with the heavenly ideal of the legislation of a higher than any earthly state, which the Redeemer sketched in his sermon on the mount. Indeed, the perfect understanding of the legislation for the kingdom of heaven, which was embodied in that discourse, had not yet been attained by them. They did not understand

that these laws are laws of the spirit, not of the letter, which require one unchangeable nature which no injustice can weary or overcome, a love expelling every thing selfish; but these laws do not prescribe to this love an unalterable rule of outward action for all the multiplicity of the relations of life. This disposition of love, which would rather endure all injustice than recompense it with the like, which would rather overcome it by endurance—yet, when necessitated for the advantage of others, can undertake to withstand injustice; as when governors employ the power invested in them by God against evil-doers within a state, or hostile forces from without. As long as the power of sin exists among men, all this cannot be taken away by the power of love, nor all opposition against the kingdom of God be overcome; but every thing ought to be animated and determined by love.

Thus the youth Maximilian, in Numidia, under the Emperor Diocletian, glorying in Christianity with youthful fervor, surrendered his life before the outbreak of the persecution, rather than violate his conscience. The noble enthusiasm of this youth, just arrived at his majority—which a coldhearted Roman governor, who measured every thing by the rigid standard of law, could not appreciate—deeply affects our hearts, though it was defective in genuine Christian humility. When called upon to take the military oath, he stedfastly declared: "You may strike my head off, but I fight not for the world; I fight for my God." "Who has given thee this advice?" asked the proconsul. "My own heart," answered the youth, "and that Being who has called me." "Take the soldier's badge," said the proconsul. "I wear already the badge of Christ my God," (the sign of the cross.) replied the youth. The proconsul then said: "I will send thee straight to thy Christ." The young man answered: "If you only did that, it would not redound to your honour." When the proconsul ordered him to be decorated by force with the military badge, he said: "I cannot wear this badge, after I have received the badge of salvation, the badge of my Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, whom ye know not, who suffered for our salvation, whom God gave up for our sins; whom all Christians serve, for we follow him as the Prince of life, as the author of our salvation." "Enter the service," rejoined the proconsul, "that you may not come to a miserable

end." "I perish not," said the youth, "for my name is already with the Lord." The proconsul said: "In the service of our emperor, Christians are to be found who are good soldiers." The young man replied: "They know what they have to do; but I am a Christian, and I can do nothing evil." "And what evil do soldiers perpetrate?" said the proconsul. "You well know what they do," answered the youth. He met all threats by saying: "I shall not perish; if I depart from this world, my soul will live with Christ my Lord." "God be praised!" he exclaimed, when the sentence of death was passed. He cheerfully desired his father, who was present, to give the cloak which he had procured for his entrance into the army, to the person who was ordered to behead him.

The Christians also appear not to have been unanimous on the question whether they might take civil or court offices under heathen emperors, as far as it might be done without prejudice to the principles of their religion. Yet the general voice was in the affirmative, and the examples of Joseph and Daniel were brought to support it. Under several of the emperors we find Christians filling high offices of state, and occupying posts in the imperial palace. We are furnished with some examples from the instructions which a Christian bishop, Theonas, gave to an upper chamberlain (*præpositus cubiculariorum*) how he should discharge his office in a Christian manner, in the palace of an emperor who was favourable to Christians, but had not yet embraced Christianity. "You must not boast, my dear Lucian," he writes, "that many individuals in the imperial palace have been brought by your means to the knowledge of the truth; but you must rather thank our God, who has made you a good instrument in a good cause, and has brought you into high repute with the emperor, that you may spread the good report of the Christian name to the divine glory and the salvation of many. For since the emperor, though not a Christian, believes that he can trust Christians as the most faithful, with his body and life, you must be proportionately more careful in your service, that then Christ's name may be glorified to the utmost, and the faith of the emperor be promoted by you who daily serve him. Far be it from you that you should sell access to the emperor for gold, or that, overcome either by

entreaties or threats, you should give any unworthy counsel to the emperor. Far from you be all the attractions of gain which looks more like idolatry than the religion of Christ. No ill-gotten gain, no falsehood, becomes the Christian who has devoted himself to the simple, unhypocritical Christ. No slanderous, offensive language must be heard among you. Every thing must be conducted with discretion, kindness, and probity, that in all the name of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified." To the librarian who held office under the chamberlain, he gives this advice: "Although he is a Christian, let him not despise earthly sciences, and the great pagan philosophers in whom the emperor delights. Let him praise each of those great writers in his own department, but sometimes let him drop something in praise of the Holy Scriptures; let him lead the conversation to Christ, and gradually show that he alone is the true God. All this, by the help of Christ, may be accomplished. Only do no evil to any one; excite no one's wrath. If any injustice is done to you, look to Jesus Christ, and as you desire that he would forgive you, so also do you forgive. Then you will overcome all envy, and crush the head of the old serpent, who plots with all his craft against all your good works, and all the success of your efforts. Let no day pass over in which, at a given time, you do not read a portion of Holy Writ, and meditate upon it. Never neglect the reading of the Bible, for nothing so nourishes the heart and enriches the mind as this; but especially derive from it the advantage of fulfilling your calling in patience, honestly and piously, that is, in the love of Christ; despise all transitory things for the sake of his eternal promises, which surpass all human ideas and conceptions, and will lead you to eternal happiness."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF CHRISTIANS.

TERTULLIAN contrasts the joys of the Christian life with worldly and heathen pleasures.* "Believe not that even this short period of the corporal life of Christians is joyless. Wherefore art thou so unthankful that thou dost not esteem enough and acknowledge the many and great pleasures which are granted thee by God? For what is more blessed than reconciliation with God our Father and Lord, than the revelation of truth, the detection of error, the forgiveness of great sins? What greater joy than even the disgust with worldly joys; than the contempt of all worldly things; than true freedom; than a pure conscience; than peacefulness in life; and the absence of fear in the prospect of death; than to be able to tread under foot the gods of the heathen world, and to cast out evil spirits, and to seek for revelations? These are the pleasures, the entertainments of Christians—holy, everlasting, and not to be purchased with money."

* Jam nunc si putas delectamentis exigere spatium hoc, cur tam ingratus eo, ut tot et tales voluptates a Deo contributas tibi satis non habeas neque recognoscas? Quid enim jucundius, quam Dei Patris et Domini reconciliatio, quam veritatis revelatio, quam errorum recognitio, quam tantorum retro criminum venia? Quæ major voluptas, quam fastidium ipsius voluptatis, quam seculi totius contentus, quam vera libertas, quam conscientia integra, quam vita sufficiens, quam mortis timor nullus, quod calcas deos nationum, quod dæmonia expellis, quod medicinas faces, quod revelationes petis, quod Deo vivis? Hæ voluptatis, hæc spectacula Christianorum sancta, perpetua, gratuita; in his tibi ludos circenses interpretare, cursus seculi intuere, tempora labentia spatia dinumera, metas consummationis exspecta, societates ecclesiarum defende, ad signum Dei suscitare, ad tubam angeli erigere, ad martyrii palmas gloriare. Si scenicæ doctrinæ delectant, satis nobis litterarum est, satis versuum est, satis sententiorum, satis etiam canticorum, satis vocum, nec fabulæ, sed veritates, nec strophæ, sed simplicitates. Vis et pugillatus et luctatus? præsto sunt, non parva sed multa. Adspice impudicitiam dejectam a castitate, perfidiam cæsam a fide, sævitiam a misericordia contusam, petulantium a modestia obumbratam, et tales sunt apud nos agones, in quibus ipsi coronamur. Vis autem et sanguines aliquid? habes Christi.—Tertull. *de Spectac.* § 29.

As to what especially concerns domestic life, the same writer thus describes the happiness of a Christian marriage.* "How can we find words to express the happiness of that marriage which the Church effects, and the oblation confirms, and the blessing seals, and angels report, and the Father ratifies. What a union of two believers, with one hope, one discipline, one service, one spirit, and one flesh! Together they pray, together they prostrate themselves, and together keep their fasts, teaching and exhorting one another. They are together at the church and at the Lord's supper; they are together in straits and refreshments. Neither conceals anything from the other; neither avoids the other; neither is a burden to the other; freely the sick are visited, and the needy relieved; alms without torture; sacrifices [the gifts presented at the altar] without scruple; daily diligence without hindrance; no using the sign [of the cross] by stealth; no hurried salutation [of fellow-Christians]; no silent benediction; psalms and hymns resound between the two, and they vie with each other which shall say best to their God. Christ rejoices on hearing and beholding such things; to such persons he sends his peace. Where the two are, he is himself; and where he is, there the Evil One is not."

Christian matrons expressed the change that had passed over them, in their whole outward appearance; the modesty and absence of display in the attire of Christian females formed a striking contrast to the unbecoming and showy dress of many heathen women. "If the duty of friendship," says Tertullian, "and of kind offices to the heathen calls you,

* Quale jugum fidelium duorum unius spei, unius disciplinæ, ejusdem servitutis! Ambo fratres, ambo conservi, nulla spiritus carnisve discretio. Atque vero duo in carne una; ubi caro una, unus et spiritus. Simul orant, simul volutantur, et simul jejunia transigunt, alterutro docentes, alterutro hortantes, alterutro sustinentes. In ecclesia Dei pariter utrique, pariter in convivio Dei, pariter in angustiis, in persecutionibus, in refrigeriis; neuter alterum celat, neuter alterum vitat, neuter alteri gravis est; libere æger visitatur, indigens sustentatur; eleemosinæ sine tormento, sacrificia sine scrupulo, quotidiana diligentia sine impedimento; non furtiva signatio, non trepida gratulatio, non muta benedictio; sonant inter dues psalmi et hymni, et mutuo provocant, quis melius Deo suo cantet. Talia Christus videns et audiens gaudet, his pacem suam mittit; ubi duo, ibi et ipse; ubi et ipse, ibi et malus non est.—Tertull. *ad Uxorem*, ii. 9.

why not appear with your own proper weapons, so much the rather when you have to do with strangers to the faith. Let there be a distinction between the handmaids of the devil and those of God, that you may be an example to them, and that they may be edified by you, that God may be glorified in your body, as the apostle says; but he is glorified by chastity and by an attire that accords with chastity." Many persons of laxer sentiments said, on the other hand, that Christians ought not to give occasion to the heathen to blaspheme the name of God and his doctrine (1 Tim. vi. 1), by a sudden and striking alteration in the exterior, that people might not have to say—what they would be sufficiently disposed to do—that Christianity turned men into demure hypocrites. To such persons Tertullian replied: "On that ground, then, let us not put away our ancient vices; let us retain the same morals, as well as the external appearance; and then, forsooth, the heathen will not blaspheme! A great blasphemy, indeed, if it be said, Since she has become a Christian, she goes about more meanly dressed! Will she be afraid to appear poorer since she has become richer, and to appear meaner since she has become more adorned? Must Christians walk according to the good pleasure of the heathen or of God? Let our only wish be, to avoid giving just cause for blasphemy. How much more blasphemous it is, if ye who are called the priestesses of chastity go about decorated and painted after the manner of the immodest?" When some persons said that the main point to be regarded was not the exterior, but the internal disposition, which was visible to him who sees the innermost heart; Tertullian endeavoured to show that it was a Christian duty to avoid every appearance of evil, and to express by the whole outward life the essential nature of the religion which is professed, and thus to win men over to it. "God is the searcher of hearts, we all know; but yet we recollect what the apostle has said: 'Let your honesty (*probrum vestrum*) be known unto all men,' (Phil. iv. 5); and why, unless that wickedness may gain no access to you, and that ye may be an example and a testimony to the wicked? Or why is it said: 'Let your works shine?' Or why does the Lord call us 'the light of the world?' Why does he compare us to 'a city set upon a hill,' if we are not to shine amongst those that are in darkness, and to be conspicuous

amongst the debased? This it is which makes us the light of the world—our goodness. But goodness, at all events true and complete goodness, loves not darkness, but rejoices to be seen, and exults even in being pointed at. It is not enough that Christian chastity should be, it should also be seen; for so great ought to be its fulness that it should flow over from the mind into the manners, and rise up from the conscience into the countenance." "The Christian female," says Tertullian, "neither goes about to the temples, nor inquires after the public shows, nor knows the heathen feast-days. She has no cause for appearing in public, except to visit a sick brother, or to present a sacrifice [*i. e.* to partake of the Lord's Supper], or to hear the word of God." And among the injurious effects of a mixed marriage he adduces these: "Who would allow his wife, for the sake of visiting the brethren, to go about from street to street, the round of strange cottages, even the poorest? . . . . Who would, without suspicion, let her go to that feast of the Lord which they defame? Who would suffer her to creep into a prison to kiss the chains of a martyr; yea, and to meet any one of the brethren with the kiss? to offer water for the saint's feet? . . . . If a stranger brother came, what lodging would he expect in the house of an alien from the faith? If a present is to be made to any, the barns and cellars are closed."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CHRISTIANS IN THE TIME OF PUBLIC CALAMITIES, INFECTIOUS DISEASES, AND MORTALITY—MEMORIALS OF THE DEAD—THE MARTYRS.

We have already remarked that the heathen frequently reproached the Christians on account of public calamities, and attributed them to the wrath of the gods against these their enemies; or they said to them: "What advantage have you before us in worshipping your God, since you are subject to the same calamities? To this the teachers of the

Church replied, that the Christians, in as much as they belonged outwardly to the world, must share in earthly sufferings with the rest of mankind, but that in their inner life they were exalted above them, and that they were distinguished by the impression which these sufferings made upon them, and by the manner in which they bore them, from the heathen in common with whom they had them outwardly. "That man," says Cyprian,* "regards the misfortunes of the world as a punishment, whose whole joy and glory is in the world. That man mourns and weeps if he is unfortunate in this world, who cannot be happy in the world to come; all the fruit of whose life is enjoyed here, all whose consolation is bounded by time; whose frail and short life reckons here upon some sweetness and pleasure; when it departs hence nothing is left but punishment. But for them who have the confident expectation of future good, the attacks of present evils are not a cause of deep affliction. Lastly, we are not thrown into consternation by adversities, nor are our spirits broken, nor do we grieve, nor do we murmur in any loss of property, or failure of health. We who live more in the spirit than in the flesh, overcome the weakness of the body by the strength of the mind. By those very things which torture and weary us, we know and are sure that we are proved and strengthened. Do you believe that we suffer misfortune equally with yourselves, when you see that misfortune is borne by you and by us in a very different manner. You always manifest a noisy and complaining impatience; we show a steady and pious resignation which is always quiet and grate-

* Nec ideo quis putet Christianos iis quæ accidunt non vindicari, quod et ipsi videantur accidentium incursione perstringi. Pœnam de adversis mundi ille sentit cui et lætitia et gloria omnis in mundo est. Ille mœret et defiet, si sibi male sit in sæculo, cui bene non potest esse post sæculum, cujus vivendi fructus omnis hic capitur, cujus hic solatium omne finitur, cujus caduca et brevis vita hic aliquam dulcedinem computat et voluptatem; quando isthinc excesserit pœna jam sola superest ad dolorem. Cæterum nullus iis dolor est de incursione malorum præsentium, quibus fiducia est futurorum bonorum. Denique nec consternimur adversis, nec frangimur, nec dolemus, neque in ulla aut rerum clade aut corporum valetudine mussitamus. Spiritu magis quam carne viventes firmitate animi infirmitatem corporis vincemus. Per ipsa quæ nos cruciant et fatigant probari et corrobari nos scimus et fidemus.—Cypr. *lib. ad Demetrianum.*

ful to God; it does not reckon upon anything joyful or fortunate here below, but gently, humbly, and stedfastly, amidst all the storms of an unsettled world, waits for the time of the divine promise. We who have stripped off our earthly birth, and are new created and born again in the spirit,—we who live no longer to the world but to God, we shall realise the the gifts and promises of God when we come to God. And yet we pray day and night fervently for preservation from enemies, for rain, for the removal or alleviation of misfortune, for peace, and for your welfare." But when some Christians, who were weak in faith, deficient in an evangelical spirit, and hankering after an earthly recompence, were disquieted because they were not more exempt than the heathen from a contagious disorder, Cyprian, who for the satisfaction of such members of his church wrote his treatise on mortality, thus expressed himself: "As if a Christian became a believer, in order that he might enjoy the world free from the contact of earthly evil, and not rather that he might enter into future happiness when released from all the sufferings of the present world. What is there in this world that is not common to us with the rest of men, as long as we have, in common with them, this body subject to all the laws of bodily life? As long as we live in the world, we have a bodily nature in common with other men; only in spirit are we different from them. In short, when a Christian perceives and firmly holds the conditions on which he professes the gospel, he will be aware that he has more to conflict with than other men in this world." When others who, though not afraid of death, were troubled, because instead of dying as martyrs, they would probably die on a sick bed, Cyprian replied: "In the first place, martyrdom is not in thine own power, but depends on the grace of God. Then again, God is the searcher of the hearts and reins, he knows the most secret things, and sees thy disposition. It is one thing when there is martyrdom without the right disposition, and another thing when there is the right disposition without the martyrdom. For God requires not our blood, but our faith.* We must recollect that we must do not our own will, but God's will, as our Lord has

* Aliud est martyrio animum deesse, aliud animo defuisse martyrium. . . . . Nec enim Deus sanguinem nostrum desiderat, sed fidem quærit.—Cypr. *de Mortalitate.*

directed us to pray daily. The prevailing sickness ought to serve to prove men's dispositions, whether the healthy will take care of the sick; whether masters will show sympathy to their sick servants."

In what light Christians regarded these misfortunes, and how they distinguished themselves from the heathen, we may learn from a beautiful circular epistle which Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, a contemporary of Cyprian, wrote on such an occasion to the Egyptian churches. The persecution of the Christians under the Emperor Valerian, and after his death a civil war, occurred first; then followed a desolating pestilence. At this time Dionysius invited the Egyptian churches to the celebration of Easter in the following manner: "To other men the present may appear an unsuitable time for the celebration of a festival. But they cannot celebrate a true festival, either now or at any other time; not in a mournful time, nor yet in a joyful one, as would appear to them most suitable for a feast; [he means to say, that the ground of true festive joy cannot be given by earthly, but only by heavenly good; this joy cannot be imparted to those who are yet oppressed by the burden of their sins;] for now all is mournful. Nothing but complaints are heard in the city on account of the multitude of the dead, and of more who die daily. What happened previously was also very terrible. First of all, they persecuted us; and although we alone were persecuted and put to death, we celebrated even at that time our festival. Every place of suffering became to us a place of festive gathering, the open country, the desert, the ship, the tavern, the prison; and the perfected martyrs could celebrate the most glorious festival, who had been admitted to the festivities of heaven. After that came war and hunger, which we were obliged to bear along with the heathen. Then we were obliged to bear alone the sufferings which they inflicted upon us, yet they must also experience the sufferings which they inflicted on one another; and moreover we enjoy the peace of Christ which he has granted to us alone. Now, after we and they had been allowed to take breath for only a very short time, that epidemic broke out, most fearful and terrible for the heathen, but for us a peculiar exercise and trial of our faith. Very many of our brethren who, from their great love for their neighbours and brethren, spared not themselves—

many, every one of whom cared for the rest, visited the sick without regard to consequences, continually attended them, and served them for Christ's sake, and joyfully gave up their lives with them. Many who had recovered others by their care, died in their stead. In this way the best of our brethren, some presbyters and deacons, and approved persons among the laity, departed this life; so that this kind of death, which proceeded from the greatest piety and the strongest faith, seemed not inferior to martyrdom. And those who closed the eyes and mouths of dying Christians, who carried them away on their shoulders, embraced them, washed them and placed them in their shroud, soon afterwards shared the same fate. The heathen acted quite differently. They turned away those who fell ill; they shunned their dearest friends, or threw them half dead into the streets; for they dreaded the spread of death, which, with all their efforts, they could not easily avoid."

A man whose feelings are not sanctified and enlightened by the divine life, who lives in the world without any certain hope of the future, is either disposed to give way altogether to the irregular outburst of excessive natural feeling on the death of dear friends and relations, as we find among rude nations; or if he suppresses the natural feelings of humanity, he falls into the worse extreme of a cold insensibility, whether it proceeds from his natural temperament or is the product of a false philosophy. But Christianity does not say to a man, 'Love and friendship, like everything connected with individual personality, are transitory earthly appearances, only passing phenomena, rays of light breaking into time, which flow back to their original fountain in eternity;' it does not require from man the surrender of his individual existence with a cold resignation to a lifeless, unfeeling idea of the universe which can warm no human heart, which is nothing but a self-created idol of a perverted reason that mistakes realities for shadows, and shadows for realities. It does not require man to sacrifice to a Saturn who devours his own children, but to a loving heavenly Father, who restores what is sacrificed in a glorified, higher life; it demands a surrender to be again restored, to rise from the grave to a new glorious life in a transformed personality through a Redeemer who has conquered death. Those spirits, Christianity asserts, who

meet one another in transitory coverings, and know and love one another in the mysterious reflection of their inner life, will know and love one another far more intimately when they recognize one another in God's presence, where they shall know as they will be known; when they will recognize one another as glorified beings in a new world of glory, where God shall wipe away all tears, and there shall be no more death, and no more night, and they shall need no lamp nor light of the sun, but God the Lord shall be their light. When that which is in part is succeeded by the perfect, when faith shall be changed into sight, love will increase in proportion as it approaches nearer the original source of all love, even God, who is love. "We shall become," says Tertullian, "so much more intimately united to one another, because we are destined for a better state, we shall rise again to a spiritual communion; there will be a mutual recognition. How could we sing eternal praises to God, unless we retained the feeling and the remembrance of what we owe to him? if we do not in our glorified state retain our self-consciousness? We who will be with God, will also be one with one another, since we shall be all one in God."

Christianity, therefore, by no means suppresses the feelings of sorrow natural to human nature in our separation from those who have been snatched away from our visible intercourse; but it mitigates and moderates these feelings by the altered view of death (which is now to be regarded as a sleep from which man will awake to a glorified existence, as the birth-day of a higher life), by the confident hope it inspires of a reunion in the assembly of the perfect, and by a child-like resignation to the unsearchable wisdom of the heavenly Father, who makes all things work together for the good of his people. Cyprian often said to his church in his sermons, especially during the prevailing epidemic: "You must not mourn for those who are released from the world by the call of the Lord, when you know they are not lost, but sent before, that they may go before those who are left behind, as travellers or voyagers; we must, indeed, long after them, but not bewail them; we ought not, for their sakes, to put on black garments, since there they are already clothed in white. We must not give the heathen an opportunity justly to blame Christians by sorrowing for those whom they speak of as

living with God, as if they were lost and perished men, and thus not acknowledging as true by the witness of the heart, what they confess outwardly in words." "We betray our hope and our faith; all that we say appears to be artificial and hypocritical."

The affectionate remembrance of the departed was not suppressed or weakened by Christianity, but rather heightened, reanimated, and rendered more cordial. Communion with the living and the dead was, in truth, a communion in the Lord, a communion for eternity, the bond of which, resting in the Eternal, could be sundered by no power of death or hell. Christians have a consciousness of constant invisible communion with those from whom they are outwardly separated. In prayer, by which the Christian feels himself connected with the whole holy assembly of blessed spirits to which he belongs, he thinks especially of those dear friends who have joined it before him. These feelings in the primitive age were especially indulged on the anniversary of their death, or rather their birth-day for eternal life. They partook on these days of the Lord's body, with the lively consciousness that they were joined in communion with the Lord, and with their dear friends, his members; they made particular mention of those who had died in communion with the Lord in the church prayers at the celebration of the Supper. In the same way the death-day of the martyrs was celebrated by the whole church. The church assembled at their graves, and partook of the Holy Supper in the living consciousness of indissoluble communion with the Lord and his people; they prayed for the martyrs, who had been like themselves sinful men, and could only find salvation in the grace of the Redeemer.

The Christians also evinced their tender love to the remains of the deceased, which did not appear to them as impure, as a corpse always appears impure to the Jews and heathen, and by the latter was regarded as carrying with it a bad omen. The Christian knew only one thing to be dead and impure, that is, sin, by which man is separated from the source of all true life; only from this impurity it was needful that man should purify himself by faith in the Redeemer, who suffered and died for him (by the inward sprinkling of the heart with the blood of Jesus, as it is described in the Epistle to the

Hebrews); he was bound to give himself continually to the new life, and to regret all that was dead; since both soul and body were destined to be living, pure and sanctified as the organ of a holy, all-penetrating higher life. Thus Christians regarded the remains of their brethren with peculiar love and care, as the organs formerly animated by a sanctified soul, temples of the Holy Spirit, which would hereafter be again animated as the glorified organs of glorified souls.

The fanaticism of the heathen wished to deprive the Christians of the precious remains of their martyrs, as they said at the martyrdom of Polycarp, when they hesitated to give his ashes to his friends, "lest they should leave the crucified One, and worship him instead." When the Christians were told of this, they replied, that the heathen "know not that we can never forsake Christ, who suffered for the salvation of those who are saved in all the world, nor can we reverence any other; for we adore him, being the Son of God; but the martyrs we worthily love on account of their unconquerable obedience to their own king and teacher, of whom may we be joint-partakers and fellow-disciples." The church said further, in their account of his martyrdom: "At last, taking his bones, more valued than precious stones, and esteemed above gold, we deposited them in a suitable place. There, if possible, assembling in joy and gladness, the Lord will grant us to celebrate the birth-day of his martyrdom, in memory of those who have endured past conflicts, and as an exercise and preparation for those that are to come after them."

We see, from these examples, how far they were at that time from over-valuing the vessels of divine grace. But such an over-valuation is an error into which man easily falls. He easily transfers the honour which is due to the Lord alone to the frail vessel which the Lord has made use of for his own glory. We have already noticed the dangers that threatened from this quarter. Tertullian felt himself obliged to protest against the excessive veneration of confessors and martyrs which was gaining ground in his times, when some who had been excommunicated for their vicious practices set too great a value on the absolution granted by the confessors, to whom they resorted in the mines or the prisons. Against the claims of such confessors he says: "Who is there without sin, as long as he lives on earth and in the flesh? Whoever is a martyr,

as long as he dwells on earth, has to beg for the denarius (Matt. xx. 2), is answerable to him who requires interest for the talents committed to him, and needs the physician. But supposing that the sword is already waving over his head, that he is surrounded by the flames, that he is already safe in the possession of martyrdom, who can authorize a man to give what belongs to God alone? It will be enough for a martyr to be purified from his own sin. It is ingratitude or pride, to wish to extend to others what he cannot succeed in obtaining for himself. Who is there, excepting the Son of God, who has paid another's death by his own? For in the very time of his passion he liberated the malefactor. For this very purpose he came, that being free from sin and perfectly holy, he might die for sinners. Hence thou, who wouldst imitate him in forgiving sins, suffer for me, *if* thou hast not sinned thyself. But if thou art a sinner, how can the oil in thy lamp suffice for me and for thyself too?"

PART II.

CHRISTIAN LIFE WHEN CHRISTIANITY HAD GAINED THE ASCENDENCY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

VARIOUS METHODS OF CONVERSION FROM HEATHENISM TO CHRISTIANITY.

We see in this period a great alteration in the relation of the Church to the State. The alteration consisted in the fact, that the Church, which had been hitherto oppressed, or at the utmost tolerated, became outwardly predominant; its former depressed condition was exchanged for worldly splendour, and thus multitudes were induced to enter it, for whom the internal claims of Christianity had no attraction. Although in its rise, when the Church conflicted with the external power of heathenism, in consequence of the fountain of self-deception lying in man's nature, there were not wanting merely apparent conversions; yet now, when the Church was surrounded with outward splendour, the temptations were much greater to substitute a merely outward profession for truly "being in Christ." And the great alteration of which we are speaking, arose, first of all, from the adhesion given to Christianity by the rulers of the Roman Empire, which was of such a kind that, though they believed themselves to be really Christians from conviction, and laboured with sincere zeal for the spread of the Christian Church, and its outward aggrandizement, yet their internal disposition was by no means penetrated by Christianity. Often by this false zeal, unsupported by a true Christian disposition, and unaccompanied by sound knowledge, they did far more injury to

the Christian Church, which they wished to serve, than they could have done by direct hostility.

The first of the emperors who openly professed Christianity, Constantine, especially in the first years of his reign, owing to a certain eclecticism in religion, which was for him the transition-point to Christianity, and to the influence of heathen Platonists and Christian bishops of a more moderate and gentle disposition, and also from general political considerations, was very far from wishing to suppress heathenism by force, to persecute its adherents, and to spread Christianity by compulsory means. Thus when, after the victory over Licinius, he became sole ruler of the empire, in a proclamation addressed to the oriental provinces, now first under his control, he expressed the principles of a wise toleration in such a manner, that indicated far more of the spirit of Christianity than could have been shown by any zeal for proselytizing; for here we recognise what we noticed in a former part of this work, that by Christianity the ideas of liberty of conscience, and of the universal rights of man, were first brought to light, as well as the consciousness of the right method of imbuing men's minds with Christianity. The following was his language: "Let those in error equally enjoy peace and rest with the faithful, for the improving influence of mutual intercourse may lead men into the right way. Let no one molest his neighbour; let each one act according to his inclination. Whoever has right convictions must know that they alone will live in holiness and purity whom Thou thyself dost call to find rest in thy holy laws. But those who keep at a distance from them, may, if they please, retain the temples of falsehood. We have the glorious abode of truth, which Thou hast given us to satisfy the cravings of our nature. We wish for them that, in communion of mind with us, they may participate our joy."

But he who uttered these beautiful sentiments was very far from always adhering to them in his conduct, although he employed no coercive methods of conversion. Though the heathen were not, as in later times, exposed to many acts of oppression, nor obstructed in the exercise of their worship, yet the manifold outward advantages and privileges which flowed to the Christians of all classes from the time of Constantine's accession, and the favour of the authorities, which

could often be gained in this way, became a strong motive to join the Christian Church with many to whom religion was a matter of indifference, or to whom the objects of earth were far more important than those of heaven. It became the chief interest of the persons in power, to obtain numerous adherents to the religion which they themselves professed, and for such an object, temporal allurements, favours, honours, and gifts were sufficient. Here we find no difference between the Christian emperors Constantine and Constantius and the heathen emperor Julian. It was natural, as in similar circumstances it will always be easy, that there should be many, who, according to the expression of a Christian emperor, Jovian, serve not God, but the imperial purple; who are not drawn by the heavenly Father, who are not impelled by heartfelt necessity to confess the Lord, like those of whom it is said in John ii. 24: "Jesus did not commit himself unto them;" and those to whom the Lord, rebuking their perverted earthly mind, said, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to life eternal." These very words of the Lord are applied by Augustin to such persons, when he says:* "How many seek Jesus only to receive temporal benefits! One man has a lawsuit, and seeks the interference of the clergy; another is oppressed by a more powerful neighbour, and flees to the Church; a third seeks for an advocate with a person over whom he has little influence; one in one way, and one in another. The Church is daily filled with such. Jesus is scarcely sought for his own sake." Many a one, as the same writer observes, became a nominal Christian, in order to win a powerful patron, to be able to contract a desirable marriage, to escape a threatening persecution, or to hold, as a Christian, a lucrative clerical office. Such people Augustin had in his eye, when in one of his sermons he speaks of the hypocrisy of those who, by assuming the Christian name, wish to please men rather than God. This hypocrisy was either of a grosser or more refined kind:

* Quam multi non quærunt Jesum, nisi ut illis faciat bene secundum tempus. Alius negotium habet, quærit intercessionem clericorum: alius premitur a potentiore, fugit ad ecclesiam; alius pro se vult interveniri apud quem parum valet; ille sic, ille sic; impletur quotidie talibus ecclesia. Vix quæritur Jesus propter Jesum. — August. *in Joh. Evang. Tract.* 25, § 10.

as exemplified in the case of men thoroughly worldly-minded, who, with distinct consciousness, employed religion, to which they were wholly indifferent, only as a means of attaining earthly objects; or that of men who were not wholly insensible to moral and religious interests, but in whom the earthly greatly predominated, who deceived themselves as if they were determined by internal grounds in their convictions, while yet, without being distinctly cognisant of the fact, they were actuated principally by outward considerations. In such persons who joined the Church from such impure motives, whether grosser or more refined and self-deceptive, as long as they remained in this state of impurity, the sanctifying power of the gospel could not be shown. As long as no inward cravings of the heart impelled them to the Lord, he could not be made to them righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. The great number of such merely outward members could not but injure rather than improve the constitution of the Church; for, under the outward semblance of Christianity, they brought in heathenish superstition and heathenish vices. "He who before openly appeared as a heathen," as Augustin says, "now concealed himself under the Christian name, and remained a bad man in the garb of religion."* "To be, not to seem, a Christian, is a great thing," says Jerome.† But evil is necessarily the most dangerous when it does not come into open conflict with good, but combats it under the semblance of good. Every good cause has far more to fear from false friends than from open enemies. The undivine, when it shows itself as it really is, cannot long withstand the power of the divine; but it conquers when it deceives by an assumed foreign semblance, when it mingles itself with the divine, and thereby beclouds its manifestation and obstructs its operation. The angels of darkness are always most dangerous when they clothe themselves as angels of light.

Augustin, in warning against the dangers that arise from

* Primo vel apertus paganus erat, postea palliatur nomine Christiano, sub velamine religionis occultus malus. De quibus dictum est: Populus iste labiis me honorat, cor autem eorum longe est a me.—August. *Enarr. in Ps.* 48. *Serm.* ii. § 1.

† Esse Christianum grande est, non videri.—Hieronym. *Ep.* 58 *ad Paulinum.*

the attractions of the world, when it assumes the garb of Christianity, beautifully remarks, "although the emperors become Christians, does the devil too become a Christian?"*

Those who had been induced to join the Church by these worldly motives, were the very persons who, when the court influence altered its direction, threw off the garb they had assumed; if for the sake of outward advantages they had been baptized under a Constantine, they returned to heathenism under an enemy of the Christian Church, the Emperor Julian, and after his death again became Christians. Asterius, the bishop of Amasea, in Pontus, who lived in these times, availed himself, in a sermon against avarice, of such facts, in order to show how deep those could sink who made mammon their idol. "How is it," said he, "that those who once belonged to the Church, and partook of the Holy Supper, are drawn into idolatry? Is it not by a longing to to gain earthly good, and to obtain possession of what belongs to others? When lucrative offices, or large sums from the imperial treasury were promised them, they quickly changed their religion like a cloak. And what happened before our times is still kept in remembrance, and handed down to us by report. But we ourselves have experienced many things of the kind during our lifetime. For when that emperor suddenly threw off the garb of a Christian which he had so long worn, sacrificed publicly to idols, and promised many rewards to those who did the same, how many were there who forsook the Church, and ran to the altars of the gods! How many allowed themselves to be allured by the baits of office, and then to apostatize! Branded with disgrace, they wander about the cities, objects of universal contempt; they are pointed at, as those who have betrayed Christ for a few pieces of silver." That emperor himself, to whom Asterius here alludes, Julian, had passed over from a Christianity forced upon him by education, and afterwards for a long time hypocritically professed, to a heathenism openly and enthusiastically avowed, to which he had long been secretly devoted; and a government like that of the Emperor Constantius, serving the Christian Church with a false zeal, formed and called forth a Julian, and paved the way for him.

* Et si Christiani facti sunt imperatores, numquid diabolus Christianus factus est?—August. *in Psa.* 93, § 19.

Yet, certainly, all persons who at first embraced Christianity from impure or mixed motives, did not always continue so; in many cases, the outward became the entrance to the inwards. By unexpected impressions, while joining in Christian worship or intercourse with genuine Christians, or by more intimate acquaintance with the Christian doctrine, they became gradually drawn to the Redeemer himself, and found in Christians what they had never anticipated, and thus at last from nominal became real Christians. Augustin testifies that "many who had been brought into the Christian Church by those outward motives, had attained to true renovation." The Father of spirits draws men by manifold methods; he penetrates the inmost recesses of all hearts, and hence knows infallibly what is necessary for the discipline of each one, that he may attain unto life, and be led from the outward to the inward. The Father and Ruler of the spiritual world has means at his command which no other ruler can venture to employ; to him no creature is invisible, but all things are naked and manifest; by his almightiness and infinite wisdom, He can turn evil to good, without man's being justified in doing evil that good may come. It was a dangerous error, when many persons at this period, even an Augustin, employed such carnal methods to lead men in error to a knowledge of the truth, and supposed that they could justify the use of them by their design and success. But the injunction of the apostle, "never to do evil that good may come," can never be invalidated; and this of itself is sufficient to condemn everything done professedly for the good of others, under the name of love, but not in a manner corresponding to the law of God, and the rights of every human being, as founded upon it. And although, in particular cases, evil may serve for good, yet, on the whole, more evil than good results from the use of such expedients.

The teachers of the Church, on whom it devolved to instruct the heathen who wished to enter the Church, were called upon to understand the variety of inducements and motives by which men were led to take such a step, in order to regulate their treatment of their dispositions; just as the modern missionary must be on his guard, and be capable of examining the various standpoints and mental circumstances of those with whom he comes in contact, and of treating them accord-

ingly. Thus a wise and enlightened teacher of religion could make, by his discourse, such an impression on a person who at first came to him from the impulse of outward considerations, that he would be seized by the power of truth and acknowledge the perversity of his former disposition. Augustin, in his excellent work on religious instruction, gives the following advice to religious teachers: "When a person, because he expects to gain some advantage, or to escape some injury from men whom he can conciliate in no other way, on this account becomes a Christian, he will not become a real Christian, but only seem a Christian; for faith consists not in the assent of the lips, but in the conviction of the soul. Yet the mercy of God often operates by the instrumentality of the religious teacher, so that a person, affected by his discourse, begins earnestly to wish to become that which at first he merely pretended to be. Not till this sincere will begins to operate, can we regard him as really converted; and indeed, it is concealed from us when the man whom we see present in body comes also with his heart; but still we must conduct ourselves towards him in such a manner, that although that will is not yet existent in him, it may be produced in him. Nothing will be lost, since, if this will is already in him, he will be confirmed by our instructions, though we cannot tell at what precise time this will was produced. Certainly, it is useful that we should make ourselves acquainted, if possible, with his former connections, his peculiar state of mind, or the causes by which he was moved to receive the Christian religion. But if there is no other person from whom we can learn these particulars, we must inquire of the man himself, in order to adapt our discourse to the kind of answer he makes. If he comes with a hypocritical heart, he will not hesitate to tell a falsehood. Yet we must set out in our discourse from what he tells us, even though it be false. Not that you should expose his falsehood, as if you were certain of it, but so, that if he professed a truly praiseworthy disposition, whether he spoke truly or falsely, we should still commend and praise such a disposition as he professes, and thereby make such an impression upon him, that he will be glad to *be* what before he wished to *seem*. But if he expresses a different disposition than is suited to one who is to be instructed in the Christian faith, you must set him right as an ignorant person in a

kind and gentle manner. You must briefly and impressively represent and extol the true design of the Christian religion."

Many persons, especially those who had hitherto lived in heathenism, because they were born and educated in it, and had never given themselves any further thought on religious subjects, were aroused by alarming outward impressions from this state of indifference, and led by their disturbed consciences to the gospel. Thus it came to pass that in times of public calamities, wars and earthquakes, many applied for baptism (as Augustin informs us, was the case on the occasion of an earthquake in the city of Sitisis, in the North African province of Numidia, by which two thousand persons lost their lives); many, by striking dreams or some outward phenomena, were either filled with fear at the judgments of God, or were made sensible of the divine power of the Redeemer. "Very seldom, or rather, never," says Augustin, "has it happened that a person offers himself as disposed to be a Christian, unless he has been in some way alarmed by the fear of God." Paulinus of Nola, at the beginning of the fifth century, narrates a memorable example. A poor old man who occupied some inferior situation on board a vessel, was driven about on the sea a long time in consequence of a shipwreck. Although he had lived as a heathen from habit, yet, being among Christians, he must have heard of the divine power of Christ, and perhaps had received unconsciously some impressions of it. Bereft of all human aid, he turned to the Lord Jesus. Prayer gave him composure, power, and understanding, successfully to conquer all toils and difficulties. He saw the finger of God who rescued him wonderfully from the most imminent danger; he believed that he had seen with his bodily eyes the living Christ who had been present with him in spirit. With tears he reported the miracle after his deliverance, and requested baptism. Paulinus introduces his account by saying: "As our Lord in the gospel declared, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,' so he does still. Our gracious Lord does not cease to animate our faith by evident proofs of his truth. Thus, as it is written in Acts i. 3, God our Saviour 'showed himself among us by many infallible proofs.' He operated for us on the sea as well as on the land, and what he effected in

individuals, he made to contribute to the faith and salvation of many." After giving the account, Paulinus adds: "You will perhaps inquire by whose merit this old mariner, who had grown up in the darkness of ignorance, obtained what fell to the share of those few labourers who had borne the burden and heat of the day from morning to night. Without doubt the apostle will answer (Rom. xi. 29), 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance,' and 'that no flesh can be justified by works in his sight.' It is the dispensation of grace, and faith is reckoned for righteousness; for, daily, sons of Abraham are raised out of stones. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation, when we bring the sacrifice of peace and thanksgiving; and the sacrifice which is well pleasing to God, is a contrite heart. (Psa. li.) The temple of God is now in man; salvation is in the believing heart; the All-Holy is in the purified breast. Hence that Being who does not despise the broken and contrite heart, accepted this old man who pleased him by his natural goodness, as an acceptable sacrifice; for by virtue of an innate simplicity, he must have had so pure a heart that the vices were foreign to him." There are those who hear the voice of the law inscribed on the inner man, who follow the drawing of that God who is not far from every one of us, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, although we dare not attribute to such persons that true sanctification of heart which proceeds from regeneration, and is first imparted by Christianity. But such a state of the disposition as existed in this man might be a preparative for the gospel, and when transformed by Christianity, appeared far more glorious.

Such outward impressions often served to call forth, with greater power, an impression that had long been gradually and silently made, or to bring to a sudden crisis a conflict that had long been carrying on in secret. In the fourth century, the pious Nonna, in Cappadocia, had long laboured to bring over to the gospel her husband Gregory (the father of Gregory of Nazianzus). She often prayed with fervent tears for his salvation, and endeavoured to impress him by kind persuasions and earnest admonitions; but, as her son Gregory tells us, her peculiar disposition and glowing piety effected more than all to bend and soften the soul, and to turn the will to virtue. The continual dropping of the water at last

hollowed the rock. Nonna had often in vain begged her husband to sing with her Psalm cxxii. 1: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." One night he dreamt that he sang this verse with his wife. His dream made a great impression upon him, and he was seized with an earnest desire to share in the happy spiritual life of his wife, and this favourable impression she knew how to take advantage of, regarding it as the work of the Lord.

The Emperor Constantine was probably led by his early education to regard Christ as a powerful divine Being, and the Christians in his vicinity certainly endeavoured to confirm this conviction. The war with a heathen prince, who sought to gain the assistance of his gods by a variety of magical ceremonies, also produced in him a longing after a connection with a heavenly power who could render him aid; he reminded himself, or was reminded by Christians, of the power of Christ. With such thoughts he fell asleep, and in a dream Christ appeared to him exhibiting the cross, as the sign of victory. He conquered under the banner of the cross, and now became convinced of the divine power of Christ.

Thus sometimes even erroneous representations, proceeding from a false view of religious things, such as the magical operation of the sign of the cross, led men to the acknowledgment of the divine power of the Crucified, and thus to Christianity. The paternal discipline of divine Providence often took advantage of the errors and weaknesses of men, in order to lead them into the way of salvation. Thus the astrologers of the East were led by a star to recognise in the child born at Bethlehem the great promised king, and Chrysostom* beautifully remarks in a homily on that event: "Behold the wisdom of God, how he called them (the magi)! He did not send a prophet, for they would not have received one; nor an apostle, for they would not have attended to him; nor Scriptures, for they knew them not; but he draws them

* Ἀλλ' ὅρα θεοῦ σοφίαν, πῶς αὐτοὺς (τοὺς μάγους) εκαλεσεν. Οὐ προφητὴν ἔπεμψεν οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἀνέσχοντο· οὐκ ἀπόστολον, οὐ γὰρ προσεῖχον· οὐ γραφάς, οὐ γὰρ ᾔδεσαν· αλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων καὶ συντρόφων πραγμάτων ανιμᾶται τῆς πλάνης αὐτούς. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ μάγοι ἦσαν, καὶ περὶ ἀστερας αὐτοῖς ἡ τέχνη, ἀστὴρ αὐτοις φαίνεται ἕλκων αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπερορίας.—Chrysost. *Homilia habita postquam presbyter Gotthus concionatus fuerat*, § 5.

from their error by familiar and every-day things. Since they were magi, and their art related to the stars, a star appears to them, drawing them from a foreign country—a star drew them, in order to free them from bondage to the stars. Thus Paul, also imitating his Lord (for he says, in 1 Cor. xi. 1, 'Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ'), for as his Lord sent the appearance of a star to call the astrologers, in order that resembling what they were accustomed to, they might easily follow it, and see the Lord of stars, and being freed from bondage to them, should do homage to him; so Paul, in order to set aside circumcision, consented to the circumcision of Timothy. This was true condescension—to let himself down to others, in order to raise them to him. Thus Christ did when he called the men of the East; for as he, to call men, veiled himself in human nature and form, so he called the astrologers by a star."

We find an example of this kind in the Christian pastoral poem of Severus, written in the latter part of the fourth century. Although a poem, it contains traits which are certainly taken from the life of that age. The shepherd, a heathen, notices with astonishment that during a general pest among the cattle, the herds of the Christian shepherds are spared. A Christian explains to him that this is the effect of the sign of the cross. "It is the sign of the God," he says, "who alone is now acknowledged in the great cities; to obtain the help of this God thou needest bring no bloody sacrifices. Prayer and faith effect everything." Upon this the heathen shepherd says that he is resolved to become a Christian. "How can I doubt that *that* sign, by which the power of the pest is overcome, will also avail for eternal life to men?"

But men who were led by such methods to Christianity might easily be seduced to exchange the inward for the outward—to seek the earthly instead of the heavenly—and to introduce heathenish superstition into Christianity; all which really occurred in the case of the Emperor Constantine. They were always in danger, notwithstanding their outward Christianity, of remaining in heart at a distance from vital Christianity; as Augustin describes such persons, living according to the flesh, hoping for such things from God as the wicked also possess, who place their whole happiness in the same earthly good as the wicked delight in; or if they

despise it at present, hope for it in a future life—the carnally-minded, who have a carnal faith, a carnal hope, and a carnal love. Such persons, if their expectations about earthly things are not realized, run a great risk of becoming erroneous or wavering in their faith. On this point Augustin says: "Those who long after earthly good, and wish to be prosperous in this, and pray for this alone to God, certainly so far do well that they ask it of God; but yet they are in danger. Does any one ask why they are in danger? They contemplate human things, and they see that all those earthly blessings which they long for are possessed in abundance by the ungodly and wicked, and they believe that they have lost the reward of worshipping God." And in another passage he says: "There are also others who possess indeed a better hope (better, namely, than that of the persons before mentioned, who go over to the Christian church merely from outward considerations), but yet are in no small danger, who fear God, and do not ridicule the Christian name—who do not enter the church with hypocritical hearts, but expect happiness in this life, and to be more prosperous in worldly affairs than those who do not worship the true God, And when they see some vicious and ungodly persons distinguished for earthly prosperity, while they perceive that they have less of such goods, or have lost what they once had, they become dissatisfied, as if they had no reason for worshipping God, and easily fall away from the faith."

Against this desire of earthly rewards, which led many persons with false expectations to Christianity, and then induced them to forsake it, Augustin often spoke, and especially protested against an erroneous mingling of the Old Testament stand-point with that of the New, which cherished this wrong course of conduct, as in his comment on Ps. xxxiv. 11: "The rich starve and suffer hunger, but they who seek the Lord shall want no good thing." "If you understand this literally it seems to deceive you, for you see many rich men die with their riches; you see a rich man who died on a bed of ivory, surrounded by his family, receive a magnificent burial, and you say to yourself, 'I know how very wicked this man has been, yet he lived to an old age, he died in his bed, he obtained a splendid funeral. Holy Scripture has deceived me when I hear and sing, 'The rich must starve and hunger.'

When did he starve? when did he suffer hunger? I go to church every day, daily I bow my knee, daily I seek the Lord, and have no good from it. That man never sought the Lord, and yet he died in the possession of so many good things.' Whoever thinks so falls into a snare, for he seeks the perishable provisions of earth, and not the true reward in heaven. Therefore do not so understand it. And how then am I to understand it? The answer is, 'Of spiritual good things.' But where are these? They are not to be seen with the eye, but with the heart. I do not see them, you say. He *sees* them who *loves* them. Are you poor when the dwelling of your heart is filled with the jewels of righteousness, truth, love, faith, and patience? Spread abroad your riches, if you have such, and compare them with the riches of the rich. But that man has met with a valuable mule at the sacrament, and purchased it. If the gospel were to be sold, how much would you give for it? and yet God has given it without cost, and you are unthankful. How much had that man, and what was it that satisfied him? He died in indigence, since he always wanted more than he possessed. He even wanted bread. How could he want bread? That bread of which Christ says, 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven,' and 'Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled;' 'But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing;' but we have already — what kind of good thing? They who," says Augustin,* "live carnally, believe carnally, hope carnally, love carnally, belong to the Old Testament, not to the New." The same writer says,† "Let us love God, my brethren, purely and chastely. The heart is not chaste if it worships God for a reward. How, then? Have we no reward from worshipping God? We have indeed a reward, but it is no other than God himself, for we shall see him as he is. What

* Qui vero carnaliter vivunt, carnaliter credunt, carnaliter sperant, carnaliter diligunt, adhuc ad vetus testamentum pertinent, nondum ad novum; adhuc in sorte sunt Esau, nondum in benedictione Jacob.—August. *Serm.* iv.

† Nos ergo Deum amemus, fratres, pure et caste. Non est castum cor, si Deum ad mercedem colit. Quid ergo? mercedem de Dei cultu non habemus? Habebimus plane, sed ipsum Deum, quem colimus. Ipse nobis merces erit, quia videbimus eum sicuti est.—August. *Enarr. in Ps.* lv. § 17.

does our Lord Jesus Christ say to those who love him: 'He who hath my commandments, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him.' What wilt thou then give him? 'and I will manifest myself unto him.' If you love him not, this will appear to you a little thing. But if you love him, if you long after him, if you worship him gratuitously, by whom you have been redeemed gratuitously—for you previously had no claim on him that he should redeem you—if contemplating his benefits towards you, you long, and your heart is restless in longing after him, then you will not seek for anything out of himself—he himself will be enough for you. However covetous you may be, God is enough for you; for covetousness seeks to possess the whole earth; add heaven to that, yet the Creator of heaven and earth is more than both. This is to call upon God in a right manner, to call upon him on account of himself. Those persons do not call upon him in a right manner who seek to obtain from him estates, increase of their property, long life, and other temporal things."

Augustin gave the teachers of religion in his times directions not to let those heathens who at first had been awakened by the extraordinary outward impressions we have mentioned, remain attached to outward things, but to lead them on from the outward to the inward, and to make them alive to the real nature of Christianity. "Also on the severity of God,"* said he, "by which the hearts of mortals are shaken with salutary alarm, must his love be founded, that man rejoicing to become an object of love to that Being whom he feared, may venture to love him again and fear to displease his love, even if he could do it unpunished." "We must lead the tendency of his mind," he says of such a person, "from miraculous appearances or dreams to the sure way and certain authority of Holy Writ, that he may be convinced how mercifully God has acted towards him in allowing those warnings to reach him before he could occupy himself with Holy Writ. And it must now be shown him that the Lord himself would not remind and incite him to become a Christian, and to join himself to the

* De ipsa etiam severitate Dei, qua corda mortalium saluberrimo terrore quatiuntur, caritas ædificanda est, ut ab eo quem timet, amari se gaudens, eum redamare audeat, ejusque in se dilectioni, etiamsi impune posset, tamen displicere vereatur.—August. *de Catech. rud.* § 9.

church, or that he would not train him by such signs and regulations, if he had not provided already a sure path for him in the Holy Scriptures, where he must look for no visible miracle, but accustom himself to hope in the invisible, and be admonished, not asleep, but awake."

In others, a spirit of religious inquiry was aroused by the inclination of their inner life; by their doubts respecting the heathen religion, in which they had been educated; by their intercourse with Christians, and by particulars which they had heard of Christianity. Before applying to a minister of religion for instruction, they had examined much themselves in the Scriptures, they had imparted their mental exercises to whomsoever they were able, and with whom they could confer. Hence it became Christians to be always prepared to give a reason of their faith from the Scriptures; for many an inquiring heathen who had not courage to lay his doubts before a bishop or any other ecclesiastic, turned in confidence to a Christian friend among the laity, revealed to him his restless, agitated heart, and sought from him a solution of his doubts. But what could such a friend do, if hitherto the Bible had been to himself a sealed book; if he had not yet earnestly reflected on his own faith? In reference to such cases that sometimes occurred, Augustin said to his flock: "A harassed friend comes to thee, who is unable to find *that* truth by the knowledge of which he may be saved. Wearied by all the desires and by all the poverty of the world, he comes to thee as to a Christian, and says: 'Give me a rational account of thy faith—make me a Christian.' And he asks thee after what, in the simplicity of thy faith, thou hast not to give him, and thou hast nothing to refresh the hungry soul. And reminded from without, thou art made sensible of thy own destitution, and then thou wilt learn; then thou wilt first be obliged to learn, and because thou art put to shame before him who has asked thee, but has not found in thee what he sought; thou wilt be impelled to seek, and thereby make thyself worthy to find: and where must thou seek? Where else, but in the books of the Lord? Perhaps that which he inquires after, stands somewhere in Holy Writ; but it is obscure. Perhaps Paul has said it in one of his epistles. But he has so said it, that thou canst read it but canst not understand it. And thou canst not pass it over, for the questioner

presses it upon thee; thou canst not ask Paul or Peter himself, or one of the prophets, for already they rest with their Lord; but the ignorance of this world is great, and thy hungry friend presses upon thee. A bare simple faith perhaps satisfies thee; but it does not satisfy him. Must thou abandon him? Must thou turn him out of thy house? Therefore apply by prayer to the Lord himself, to the Lord with whom the apostles and prophets rest; call upon him, cease not. He will not, like the friend in the parable, arise and give, merely because wearied out by thy importunity. He *will* give to thee. Hast thou knocked, and not yet received? Knock again, he *will* give thee. He delays to give what he means to give thee, that thy longing may be more intense. Learn and teach; love and impart nourishment."

Hence the zealous doctors of the church, such as Chrysostom, always impressed on the laity the duty of making themselves accurately acquainted with the Scriptures, in order to be in a position to give the heathen a rational account of their faith, and to explain the divine word to them. They justly observed, that the bishops, by their homilies and lectures, could effect little in this respect, unless the laity, among whom the heathen lived, operated upon them in their daily intercourse by their words and by their lives. Thus Chrysostom, in one of his homilies, after explaining to his hearers the arguments by which to oppose the attacks of the heathen on Christianity, says: "But give good heed, for it is something astonishing that the physician should know how to argue ably for his art, and even the shoemaker and the weaver, and others of any trade or art whatever, and yet that he who calls himself a Christian should not be able to give a rational account of his faith! And yet this relates to things of the highest moment, what concerns the soul, and is necessary to its salvation. And this is the reason why the heathen do not sooner attain to a knowledge of their errors; for if they who advocate falsehood employ every means to conceal the worthlessness of their doctrine, but we who profess to do homage to the truth cannot once open our mouths in its defence, will they not charge our doctrine with great weakness? We incur the guilt of their blasphemies when we treat the matters of faith as secondary objects and those of earth as primary."

In another homily he also says:* "On this account God permits us to remain in the world that we be as lights (Phil. ii. 15); that we may be teachers of others; that we may be a leaven; that we may walk as angels among men, or as men with little children; as spiritual men with the carnally-minded, that they may be profited; that we may be as seeds, and bring forth much fruit. Words are not needed, if our lives shine forth. There is no need of teachers, if we exhibit our works. No one would be a heathen, if we were Christians as we ought to be. If we keep the commands of Christ—if we suffer wrong—if we are defrauded—if, being reproached, we bless—if, being ill-treated, we do good—no one would be so brutish as not to hasten to piety, if all its professors acted thus. And that ye may know it, consider Paul was only one man, and how many did he convert to the faith! If we were all likeminded, how many people should we not gain? Behold, there are more Christians than heathens, and in other arts one man can instruct a hundred boys at once. But here, where the teachers are far more numerous, and the scholars fewer, no one comes to school; for the scholars look at the virtue of the teachers. And if they see that we desire the same things, that we strive to rule and to be honoured, how can they admire Christianity? They see persons among us full of faults, earthly-minded; we admire riches as much as they do, and even far more; we fear death, poverty, sickness, like themselves; we are the slaves of circumstances. On what grounds, then, can they believe? On account of miracles? But such things do not occur. Must love beaming upon them lead them to the faith? But of this a trace is nowhere to be found. Therefore we are answerable, not only for our own sins, but for the faults of others." And Augustin says

* Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ ἡμᾶς εἴασεν, ἵνα ὡς φωστῆρες ὦμεν, ἵνα διδάσκαλοι τῶν ἄλλων καταστῶμεν, ἵν' ὡς ζύμη γενώμεθα, ἵν' ὡς ἄγγελοι μετὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων περιπολῶμεν, ἵν' ὡς ἄνδρες μετὰ τῶν παίδων τῶν μικρῶν, ὡς πνευματικοὶ μετὰ τῶν ψυχικῶν, ἵνα κερδαίνωσιν ἐκεῖνοι, ἵνα σπέρματα ὦμεν, ἵνα καρπὸν πολὺν φέρωμεν. Οὐκ ἔδει λόγων, εἰ τοσοῦτον ἡμῶν ὁ βίος ἔλαμπεν. Οὐκ ἔδει διδασκάλων, εἰ ἔργα ἐπιδεικνύμεθα· οὐδεὶς ἂν ἦν Ἕλλην, εἰ ἡμεῖς ὦμεν Χριστιανοί, ὡς δεῖ. Εἰ τὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐφυλάττομεν, εἰ ἠδικούμεθα, εἰ κακῶς πάσχοντες εὐεργετοῦμεν, οὐδεὶς οὕτω θηρίον ἦν, ὡς μὴ ἐπιδραμεῖν τῇ εὐσεβείᾳ, εἰ παρὰ παντων ταῦτα ἐγίνετο.—Chrysost. *in* 1 *Tim.* 10, § 3.

to his church: "Which of the true believers does not announce Christ? Do you believe that *we* only who stand here announce Christ, and that you do not announce him? Whence do persons come to us to become Christians whom we have never seen or known, to whom we have never preached? Have they come to the faith without its being announced to them by any one? The Apostle says: 'How shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?' (Rom. x. 14.) Therefore the whole church announces Christ. All believers are 'the heavens which declare the glory of God,' whose care it is to win unbelievers for God, and who do this from love. God permits the terrors of his judgment to sound forth from them,—the unbeliever trembles and believes. Show men what Christ can effect in the whole world when you preach to them, and lead them to the love of Christ. Seize, lead, snatch whomsoever you can; be sure that you lead them to him who cannot but delight those who behold him; and pray to him that he would enlighten them."

We have seen, in the example of Nonna, how in a mixed marriage, pious women, who let Christianity shine forth in their lives, could gradually exert the incalculably attractive power of the divine for the conversion of their husbands, by the immediate impression of their whole conduct still more than by words; in which reference the Apostle Paul says of a heathen husband that he is sanctified by his Christian wife; an incalculable, operative principle of sanctification was thus implanted in the marriage relation. And when such wives could not overcome the unsusceptibility of their husbands, still they succeeded in scattering at an early age the seeds of Christianity in the hearts of their children. This seed often produced a great effect on the inner life, and though this effect was for a long time oppressed by the distractions and business of the world, yet often, when the storm was allayed, it brought forth rich fruit, as is shown in the memorable instance of Augustin, whose youthful heart had received early christian impressions by the instructions of his pious mother. After passing through many storms and conflicts and doubts for a series of years, by which he was borne hither and thither, he looked off from the path he was treading to that

religion which had been implanted in his childhood and entered his inmost soul, and which without his being aware drew him to itself. The Emperor Julian acknowledged how the influence of females counterworked his plans for the re-introduction of heathenism. He lamented that the heathen in Antioch permitted their wives to carry everything out of their houses for the support of the poor Christians, while they themselves would not make use of the least thing for the worship of the gods. And the rhetorician Libanius, a heathen, made this excuse for the Christians who having through fear and other causes passed over to heathenism, afterwards repented and sought to repair their apostacy, "that they were turned round at home by their wives and their tears, and led away from the altars."

The means by which the heathen were brought to Christianity must have been very various, and must indeed have varied according to the nature of the hindrances that opposed their conversion. These were outward and inward. The *outward* hindrances were in the condition of the church at that time and of the public Christian life, which was no longer the same as in the first century, as is testified by the passage already quoted from Chrysostom; the *inward* hindrances were in the various modes of thinking and mental tendencies of the heathen, in which we recognize the same tendencies which in all ages have opposed the reception of Christianity. As in the first century the genuine Christian life, as a living witness of the power of the gospel, operated powerfully in favour of its extension, so now the inconsistent lives of so many nominal Christians gave occasion for the name of the Lord to be blasphemed among the heathen. "Look at the heathen," says Augustin, "sometimes they meet with good Christians who serve God; they admire such, and are attracted to the faith. Sometimes they see those whose lives are bad, and they exclaim, 'These are your Christians!'" And Chrysostom says, in the homily last quoted, "As a blind man cannot call the sun dark, for he would be ashamed to contradict what every body acknowledges to be true,—so no one complains of the truly good; on account of their doctrine the heathen may blame such persons, but they will not attack their good life, but join with others in admiring it." In many respects, though not

absolutely and unconditionally, this was true—since the heathenish element, the wild-grown morality so to speak, even in nobler natures, though on one side it would be attracted by the power of Christianity as exhibited in the lives of its professors, would yet be repelled on many points which were peculiar to Christianity. Augustin says, in a sermon on Psalm xxvi. 12, "In the congregations will I bless the Lord," "My brethren, so live that by the conduct of each one of you the praise of God may be promoted, for whoever praises God with his tongue and blasphemes him by his works does not 'bless the Lord in the congregations.' Almost all praise him with the tongue, but not all with their works. But those persons, in whose conduct is not found what they express by their lips, cause God to be blasphemed; and those who love their sins, and therefore do not wish to be Christians, excuse themselves with the vicious, while they flatter themselves and say, 'Why wilt thou persuade me to be a Christian? I have been deceived by a Christian, but I have never deceived any one; a Christian has sworn falsely to me, but I have never done so.'"

Certainly, it cannot be denied, that the accusations of the heathen against Christianity were for the most part deserved by Christians, as appears from the complaints of Chrysostom, who was so distinguished for zeal in the cause of his Lord. When those who wished to be priests of the Lord, the leaders and teachers of the churches, especially the bishops in large cities, allowed themselves to be infected by worldly corruption, gave way to earthly passions, and under cover of pretended zeal for the honour of God, engaged in the warmest contests for selfish interests, their own honour and power,—this made a most injurious impression on the minds of the heathen, and was frequently employed by them as a witness against a religion which had such advocates. But the injustice of these accusations against Christianity lay in not distinguishing between the cause and the instruments, and even as to the latter making no difference, but confounding the lights and shadows in the phenomena of the Christian life. They did not consider that evil according to its nature attracts notice, and makes much noise as it is borne on the surface of the stream of life, and strikes superficial observers most directly and forcibly; while, on the contrary, what is truly divine is less obtrusive, conceals its indwelling glory,

works more in secret, is to be looked for at a greater depth, and may remain unnoticed, unless the eye of a kindred spirit is directed towards it. That which can best serve for a caricature, is most easily seized by every man and in all ages. The world, as such, remains always the same, and as it takes the appearance for the reality, it must take the appearance of that which has moved the minds of men most deeply, and thus the most glorious object becomes the most despicable caricatures. Moreover, Christianity at it first appearance, met the corruption that arose from the breaking up of the old world, and operated as enlivening and refreshening salt; but it could not at once transform everything. It could only evince its saving and transforming power in those cases where persons freely surrendered themselves to its influences. But where this did not take place, the existing corruption propagated and strengthened itself under the semblance of Christianity; thus, on the one hand, there was the culminating point of the corruption of the old nature, concealing itself under the semblance of Christianity; and on the other hand, in opposition to it, beaming forth with so much greater splendour, we behold what was truly the result of the new creation of Christianity. We see in a Chrysostom, a contrast to a Theophilus.* In answer to this reproach of the heathen Augustin admirably observes, "How many robberies in our times, say some, how much oppression of the innocent! thou lookest only at the scum, and not at the oil. Ancient times had not such robbers of property that belonged to others, but neither had they persons who so willingly resigned their own property. Be more attentive in observing the wine-cellars; look not merely at that which flows on the surface. Hear and understand how many do that which moved one to go away sorowful, when he heard it from the lips of the Saviour. Many hear the words of the gospel (Matt. xix. 21). 'If thou wouldst be perfect, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me.' Seest thou not how many do this. Though sayest, there are few. Yet these few are the oil; and those who apply what they possess to a right use, belong also to the oil. Take all together, and thou wilt see thy Father's store-houses filled.

* See Neander's General History of the Christian Religion and Church, vol. iii. p. 301, Standard Library edition.—Tr.

Thou seest a robber as thou hast never seen him; see also the man who despises earthly good, as thou has not yet seen any one. That is fulfilled which is written in the Apocalypse: 'He which is filthy let him be filthy still, and he that is holy let him be holy still;' good and evil still go on in a reciprocal climax." And in another sermon he says: "Much evil results from bad Christians; those who are without and do not wish to be Christians, take occasion from their conduct to excuse themselves. A heathen replies to the person who exhorts him to become a Christian,—'Am I then, to be what this man or that man is?' and he names one and another, and sometimes says the truth; but let not that lead thee wrong; be thou that which he seeks. Be thou a good Christian, in order to put a stop to the calumnies of the heathen. Forswear impurity, but not the faith. Become purer; by the exertion of the conflict itself, become purer;—let the heathen assist in removing from thee what pollutes thee, not in suppressing what is of real value in thee.* When thy enemy injures thee, he injures thee openly. Thou prayest for him in secret and only God knows it; thy enemy does not believe it, because he cannot see into thy heart. When therefore he injures thee openly, thou prayest in secret. See whether in that wine-press, since the church has been compared to a wine-press, whether he that injures openly is not the scum flowing along the surface;† the scum flows over the surface, but the oil has a secret passage to its proper receptacle. And as it passes in secret, it will appear in its greatness. Amidst the storms of the world, how many, brought back by this predominance of evil, have turned to God and renounced the world; and they who before seized what belonged to others, have suddenly begun to give up

* Augustin means to say—Let not the attacks of the heathen infuse into thee any mistrust of the divine power of Christianity, but let them only serve to make thee more watchful over what is contrary to it in thy own soul; thus, by surrendering thyself to it, thou wilt by its divine power become continually purified, and make progress in sanctification. The same remarks are applicable to the charges brought against the peculiarities of Christian piety, which are founded on the false pretences to piety or on the imperfections that still cleave to the truly pious.

† Amurca per publicum currit, oleum autem ad sedem suam occultos transitus habet. Et cum occulte transeat, in magnitudine apparet.—August. *Serm.* xv. § 9.

their own to the poor. But many robbers and oppressors attract public notice: they are the scum flowing through the streets; they may be outwardly separated, one here, and another there, but they are joined in heart!"

Often the deluded opponents of Christianity, or pharasaical censors who would rather notice the mote in another's eye than the beam in their own, have made an extravagant demand on Christianity inconsistent with the constitution of human nature, as destined to a free development, that it should transform by one stroke as by a magical power human nature in the whole and in all its parts—should at once make all rough places smooth, and crooked ways straight; and when they do not see this irrational requirement fulfilled, they pronounce Christianity to be a fallacy, and Christians to be hypocrites. They do not consider that the great work of the new birth, of the new creation, must have its distinct commencement in the inner life, but that this work can only gradually develop itself in its full extent—always carrying on a conflict with the still existing old, corrupt nature; that Christianity is a leaven in reference to individuals, as well as to whole nations and races, which once thrown into the mass, can only gradually penetrate and leaven with its peculiar nature, with a gradual separation of foreign elements; the foundation on which the structure of the Christian life is raised, either for communities or individuals, may be truly divine, and yet wood, hay, and stubble may appear on this divine foundation, which is Christ, along with the gold, silver, and precious stones; and the superficial or hostile observer may see only the former and not the latter. That may be affirmed of the church which has its true stability in the souls of believers, both as a body and in individuals, which an enlightened man in the beginning of the seventeenth century, Paul Sarpi, says, in a letter: "The church of God is a building which, though founded by so great an architect, yet in consequence of the defects of the materials of which it is constructed, it always has had, and always will have, its imperfections. And if only the foundation remains firm, we must bear with other defects, and let them pass as human." On this account, the Christian should never let the sword of the Spirit remain in the scabbard, in order to obviate this defect, which so easily gives occasion for slandering the divine foun-

dation to those who do not know it, and for the name of the Lord to be reviled among those who are without, through the misconduct of those who profess it.

As Augustin remarks, in the passages we have quoted, it was often a certain internal ground which caused the heathen to find and take that outward offence. There was something in their inner man which led them to seek, and easily to find, grounds of excuse, in order to exclude the gospel from gaining access to their consciences. Instead of comparing their inner man with the ideal of holiness expressed in the life and doctrine of Christ—instead of seeking out the members of the invisible church—the genuine Christians, whose great aim it was to imitate their Redeemer, and recognizing in them the genuine effects of this religion where it is sincerely received, —instead of this, they pleased themselves with observing only the evil that was floating on the surface of the outward church, and that which resembled it, and still adhered to Christians, who were in heart sincere, among whom there were many stages of development in the Christian life up to the maturity of full-grown manhood. If in their own lives they kept free from gross outbreaks of sin, performed their duties in their civil capacity according to the common standard, and if they then compared themselves with those nominal Christians who lived in open vice, they thought that they advanced further with their own moral power than those professed believers in Christianity; they also thought that even in those who must be regarded as genuine Christians, such failures could be discovered as they perceived in their own lives, but were accustomed to excuse as weaknesses which were inseparable from human nature. They thought that they had less need of a Redeemer, because they were not sinners like those Christians, because they fulfilled the requirements of the moral law, those human weaknesses excepted, which were also to be found among Christians. It would have appeared altogether different to them if they could have rightly apprehended in the divine light the high standard of the law, and the state of their own inner man in relation to it. "Many," says Augustin, "boast of their works, and thou findest many heathen who do not wish to become Christians; for this reason, that they are satisfied with their own virtuous life. 'It is our duty to live virtuously,'

say they; 'what more can Christ prescribe to us? That I should live virtuously? I already live virtuously; for what purpose is Christ necessary to me? I am guilty of no murder, no theft, no robbery; I do not covet my neighbour's goods; I am not polluted with adultery. Let any man find something culpable in my life, and whoever can do that, let him make me a Christian.' " And in another sermon he says: 'There are many persons who, according to commonly-received notions, are called good men, good husbands, good wives, who, without being Christians, appear to observe the prescriptions of the law, honour their parents, commit neither adultery, nor murder, nor theft; bear no false witness against any one, and like the Pharisees of old, ask in a boastful tone, 'Are we also blind?' " (John ix. 40.)

Augustin says, in reference to such who fancied that their moral efforts were sufficient:* "The right direction of the disposition makes an action good; but faith gives the right direction to the disposition. It is not only of importance *what* a man does, but *what object he has in view* in doing it. Let the captain of a vessel understand perfectly how to manage it, but if he does not know the direction of the port he is sailing to, of what use is it that he can sail hither and thither as he pleases? He knows how to protect the vessel from the fury of the waves, to turn and to tack about just as

* Ea enim opera quæ dicuntur ante fidem quamvis videantur hominibus laudabilia inania sunt. Ita mihi videntur esse, ut magnæ vires et cursus celerrimus præter viam. Nemo ergo computet bona sua opera ante fidem; ubi fides non erat, bonum opus non erat. Bonum enim opus intentio facit, intentionem fides dirigit. Non valde adtendas quid homo faciat, sed quid cum facit adspiciat, quo lacertos optimæ gubernationis dirigat. Fac enim hominem optime gubernare navim, et perdisse quo tendit, quid valet quia artemonem optime tenet, optime movet, dat proram fluctibus? Cavet ne latera infligantur; tantis est viribus, ut detorqueat navim quo velit atque unde velit; et dicatur ei: usque quo is? et dicat: nescio; aut non dicat: nescio, sed dicat: ad illum portum eo, nec in portum sed in saxa pertinet? Nonne iste quanto sibi videtur in navi gubernanda agilior et efficacior, tanto periculosius eam sic gubernat, ut ad naufragium properanda perducat? Talis est et qui optime currit præter viam. Nonne ergo erat melius et tolerabilius, ut esset gubernator ille aliquanto invalidior, ut cum labore et aliqua difficultate gubernacula regeret, et tantum rectum debitumque cursum teneret; rursumque ille pigrius etiam et imbecillius, tamen in via ambularet, quam præter viam fortiter curreret. —August. *in Ps.* xxxi. *Enarr.* 2, § 4.

he may think best; but if asked, Whither are you sailing? he answers, I do not know; or, instead of saying that, he says, I am sailing to yonder port, and then runs not into port, but against the rocks. Will not such a man, the more active and vigorous he strives to be in steering the vessel, run the greater risk of a speedy shipwreck? So it is with the man who, if he runs ever so well, has lost the right path. Would it not be better if the captain were not so vigorous, if he steered the vessel with labour and some difficulty, and yet pursued the right track; and would it not be better for the traveller if he were weaker and slower, but yet in the right way, rather than be running in the wrong direction?" Further, he says of those persons who think that their virtue is so great that they need no Redeemer: "Although a man does everything that is right before the eyes of men in such a manner that they can find no fault with his life, yet God will condemn their arrogance;" for the right disposition, which Augustin was accustomed to compare to the eye as the light of the body, is, according to his own explanation, that of humble love towards God.

Others of the heathen acknowledged the elevation of the Christian morality, but they availed themselves of the un-Christian lives of so many nominal Christians, to support the opinion that this morality was too high for human beings. Let us hear what Augustin says of this class of heathens: "What did the pagan formerly say? Whom do you reverence? A dead, crucified Jew, a powerless man, who could not deliver himself from death. But after he had seen the human race assemble in the name of Christ, the temples demolished, the idols broken in pieces, the sacrifices abolished in the name of the Crucified; when men were seized with admiration, and their hearts could no longer reproach Christ, the pagan concealed himself in the praise of Christ, and sought another method of deterring men from the faith. The Christian doctrine is indeed lofty, powerful, divine, incomparable, but who conforms to it?" Augustin answers: "O that the doubters were believers; that they would not say, who fulfils this? True, if they trust their own strength, they will not fulfil it. But, if confiding in the grace of God, they were believers in this confidence, they might go on, and obtain help from God, instead of condemnation. Believers

live, each one fulfilling in his own station the precepts of Christ; they live as far the Lord grants them to live, and depend not on their own strength, but are aware that they must glory in the Lord alone. 'For what hast thou, that thou dost not receive?' (1 Cor. iv. 7.) 'Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?' Say not to me, 'Who fulfils it?' He fulfils it in me who, because he was rich, came to the poor; in poverty truly to the poor, but with fulness to the empty. Whoever considers this, and does not despise the poverty of Christ, he knows the riches of Christ, and is already saved, even in this world."

Another external hindrance which deterred the heathen from Christianity was the variety of opinions and sects into which Christians were divided. "How can we look for truth among you," they said, "since you are not of one mind among yourselves about your religion? To which scheme of doctrine shall I turn myself? Each one says, 'I teach the truth.' Whom shall I follow, since I know nothing of the Holy Scriptures?" Chrysostom thus replies to this objection:* "If we professed to follow human reasonings, thou mightest be perplexed. But if we say that we believe the Scripture, and this is simple and true, thou mayest easily come to a decision. Whoever agrees with it, he is a Christian; whoever opposes it, he is very far from being one." The heathen rejoins: "But if some one comes and says, this stands in Scripture, but thou sayest something different; and so the Scripture is interpreted arbitrarily, and our minds are distracted." "But hast thou not reason and the power of judgment given thee by God?" is Chrysostom's reply.

* Ἔρχεται Ἕλλην, καὶ λέγει, οτι βούλομαι γενέσθαι Χριστιανός· ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδα τίνι προσθῶμαι Μάχη παρ' ὑμῖν πολλὴ καὶ στάσις, πολὺς θόρυβος. Ποῖον ἕλομαι δόγμα; Τί αἱρήσομαι; ἕκαστος λέγει, ὅτι ἐγὼ αληθεύω. Τίνι πεισθῶ, μηδὲν ὅλως εἰδὼς ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς; Κἀκεῖνοι τὸ αὐτὸ προσβάλλονται; Πάνυγε τοῦτο ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. Εἰ μὲν γὰρ λογισμοῖς ἐλέγομεν πειθεσθαι, εἰκότως ἐθορυβου. Εἰ δὲ γραφαῖς λέγομεν πιστεύειν· αὗται δὲ απλοῖ καὶ ἀληθεῖς, εὔκολον σοι το κρινόμενον. Εἴ τις ἐκείναις συμφωνεῖ, οὗτος Χριστιανός· εἴ τις μάχεται, οὗτος πόρρῳ τοῦ κανόνος τούτου. Τί ουν ἂν ἐκεῖνος ἐλθὼν εἴπῃ, τοῦτου ἔχειν την γραφὴν, σὺ δὲ ἕτερον λεγῃς, καὶ ἀλλως παρεξηγῆσθε τὰς γράφὰς τὰς διανοίας αὐτῶν ἕλκοντες; Σὺ οὖν, εἰπέ μοι, νοῦν ουκ ἔχεις οὐδὲ κρίσιν;—Chrysost. *in Act. Apost. Hom.* 33, § 4.

But this professed external hindrance was often only a pretext behind which lay concealed an antipathy to the gospel arising from other internal grounds, or sloth and indifference to the higher concerns of man. How often it has happened that men who have never been disposed to inquire into the truth respecting divine things with that zeal and earnestness with which they pursue earthly objects excuse themselves by the variety of contradictory opinions and the difficulty of finding the truth, and thus surrender themselves to a comfortable indifference, or throw themselves blindly into the arms of some authority that offers itself. But such men ought to seek for the reason which prevents their finding the truth in their own state of mind; for, as Augustin justly remarks:* "If truth is not sought with all the powers of the soul, it cannot be found. But if it be so sought as it deserves, it cannot be withdrawn and hidden from those who love it. 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. There is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed.' It is love which prays; it is love which seeks; it is love which knocks; to love it is revealed; and by love is rest found in what is revealed." "Do what thou oughtest to do," says Chrysostom to such persons, "and seek with a right mind to receive the truth from God, and he will certainly reveal it to thee." And in another homily he says: "The present life is a scene of conflict, and a man must have a thousand eyes on all sides not to believe that ignorance is a sufficient excuse; for wilful ignorance is deserving of punishment. But if thou dost not know what it is not possible for thee to know, thou wilt be free from responsibility. But, provided we are not negligent, but do our part, God will assist us in what we do not know; as Paul said to the Philippians, 'If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.' Ask not, therefore, how can God leave that simple good man in heathenism? For, in the first place none

* Si sapientia et veritas non totis animi viribus concupiscatur, invenire nullo pacto potest. At si ita quæratur, ut dignum est, subtrahere sese atque abscondere a suis dilectoribus non potest. Hinc est illud, quod in ore habere etiam vos soletis, quod ait, Petite et accipietis; quærite, et invenietis; pulsate, et aperietur vobis. Nihil est occultum, quod non revelabitur. Amore petitur, amore quæritur, amore pulsatur, amore revelatur, amore denique in eo quod revelatum fuerit permanetur. — August. *de Morib. Eccl. Cath.* 1, § 3.

but that Being who *fashioneth all hearts* (Psa. xxxiii. 15), can know whether any one is simple. It might be also said, he often did not exert proper diligence, nor show becoming zeal. And how, thou askest, could he do this, since he is so simple? Look at this simple man in his worldly concerns, and you will see him exert diligence enough. If he only exerted as much in spiritual things, God would not leave him unnoticed."

Had Christians, indeed, with all their diversities of opinion on unessential points, been united by love to their common Lord, and by mutual brotherly love, these differences would not have been of so much importance to the heathen. Their unity in Christ would have manifested a power superior to all those differences, and the power of love would have done more than all things beside to overcome the opposition of their minds; as Chrysostom says, in one of his homilies: "As clothes and shoes, covered with gold, are not enough to make the emperor known; but if we see the purple mantle and the diadem, we seek no other sign of the imperial dignity,—even so it is here. Where the diadem of love is, it is sufficient to make us known, not only to the genuine disciples of Christ, but also to unbelievers. Hence this sign is greater than all miracles, since by it the true disciples are known. If they performed a thousand miracles, and yet were at variance with one another, they would be scoffed at by unbelievers; but if, on the contrary, though they perform no miracles, they only have genuine love towards one another, they will be honoured and invincible."

The same Chrysostom says of this power of love: "How wilt thou convert him who is in error, if thou hatest him? How canst thou pray for the unbeliever? For that thou art bound to pray for him, let Paul teach thee: 'I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for men.' (1 Tim. ii. 1.) But that at that time all men were not believers, is clear to every one. And then he adds: 'for kings, and for all that are in authority.' But it is also clear that these were heathens. Then he gives the reason: 'for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.' On this account, when he found a heathen woman married to a believer, he does not dissolve the union (1 Cor. vii. 12); and yet what

stands nearer to the wife than the husband? But if we hate the ungodly, we must hate not merely the ungodly, but sinners. And so we shall be worse than wild beasts; we shall turn away from all, lifted up with pride like the Pharisee. But Paul does not give such directions; what does he say? 'Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient towards all men.' (1 Thess. v. 14.) What does he mean, when he says: 'If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him.' (2 Thess. iii. 14.) This is said especially of Christian brethren, but not without a further application; yet this must be done with gentleness, for after he had said, 'have no company with him,' he adds, 'yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.' Thou seest that he commands thee to hate the vicious act, and not the man; for it is the devil's work to separate us from one another, and he labours hard to banish love, in order to stop the way to improvement, to keep that man in the wrong way and thyself in hatred, and thus exclude him from the way of salvation. For if the physician hates and flees from the sick man, and the sick man shuns the physician, when will the sick man rise from his bed; if neither he calls the physician to him, nor does the physician go to him? But tell me, wherefore dost thou avoid and flee from him? Because he is godless? But precisely for that reason thou oughtest to receive him, and labour for his salvation. Even if his malady be incurable, still thou must do thy part; for the malady of Judas was incurable, and yet the Lord ceased not to labour for his healing. So thou must not be weary; for if thou labourest without freeing him from his ungodliness, thy reward will be the same, and thou wilt oblige him to admire thy gentleness; and thus all will redound to the glory of God. If thou workest miracles and raisest the dead, whatever thou mayest do, the heathen will never so admire thee as when they recognize in thee a gentle and a mild believer. And this is no small gain; for thus many will be altogether freed from evil. Nothing can attract with such power as love. Other points of superiority, such as miracles, may excite their envy: here they will at once admire and love thee. If they love thee, they will gradually be led to the truth. But if a person does not at once become a believer, do not be surprised; be not over hasty; think not

to effect everything at once. Let him at first only praise and love, and then will he gradually advance further."

Many pious bishops and monks who were deeply imbued with the Christian spirit sought to win the heathen by the power of love, and to lead them to the Redeemer. Thus towards the end of the fourth century, a monk, Abraham, in Phœnicia, having been recovered from a dangerous illness, felt himself impelled to prove his gratitude to the Lord, by exposing himself to great danger in publishing the gospel. In the disguise of a merchant he betook himself, with several companions, to a village in Lebanon, where all were pagans, under the pretence that they wished to purchase walnuts there, for which that village was noted, and took sacks with them for that purpose. But when the people heard him singing spiritual songs with his friends in a hired house, men and women assembled in a rage, barricaded the door of the house, uncovered the roof, and ceased not to throw a quantity of rubbish, so that at last the Christians were likely to be buried under it. They expected death, praying calmly, till their patience and resignation allayed the fury of the better-disposed among the heathen, who opened the door, drew out the Christians from the rubbish, and commanded them to go away immediately. At this instant the imperial taxgatherers arrived, who demanded more than the poor people could pay, and began taking severe and cruel measures against the defaulters. But the pious Abraham, who had much influence as a revered monk, now interceded for those who a little while before had threatened him with a shameful and frightful death. He offered himself as surety to the tax-gatherers, hastened to the neighbouring town of Emesa, borrowed a large sum of money from his friends, and satisfied the merciless tax-gatherers. The hostility of the villagers, conquered by the power of love, was now changed into love, gratitude, and reverence. They requested their deliverer, as they had no overseer of the village, to undertake the office. He agreed, on the condition that they would build a church. In a short time it was erected, and he now urged them to appoint a clergyman to it. They entreated him to be himself their spiritual father and shepherd, as well as their overseer in civil matters, and by his labours for the space of three years he laid the foundation of the Christian church, where

now the little tribe of Maronites, so distinguished for their pure and simple manners amidst the general corruption of the East, dwell, but who in recent times have been very much disturbed by political revolutions and war with the Druses.

Protogenes, a presbyter of Edessa, was banished by the Emperor Valens in the fourth century, as an opponent of the Arian heresy, which was favoured by that emperor, and sent to the city of Antinous in Egypt. He found that the churches here were almost empty, and on inquiring the cause, he learnt, to his great grief, that the greater part of the inhabitants of the city were still heathens. Love impelled him to contrive some method by which he might scatter unperceived the seed of the divine word in the minds of the youth. As he was skilled in short-hand, he opened a school to give lessons in that art. He dictated to the heathen youth, as exercises in short-hand, passages from the Psalms and the Gospels, which, as well as the truths they contained, were thus impressed on their minds; a method which has been adopted, not without good results, by missionaries in the East Indies, Siam, and Africa. One of the youths became very ill; Protogenes visited him with paternal love, prayed at his bed-side, and he was restored to health. This love and the answer to prayer made a great impression on the heathen.

In the war which the Roman emperor, Theodosius II., carried on against the Persians, who were violent enemies of Christianity, seven thousand prisoners were dragged away by the Roman soldiers, and found themselves in a miserable plight. Acacius, bishop of Amida, a city in Mesopotamia, on the borders of the Roman empire towards Persia, called his clergy together, and said to them: "The pious love of our Christian brethren has presented the church with a number of gold and silver vessels. But our God does not need silver and gold. Let us rather make use of them for the aid of our unfortunate fellow-men." The gold and silver were melted down to make coin, and the prisoners were not only set at liberty, but also sent back to their homes with money and provisions for the journey: this work of love naturally made an impression in favour of Christianity on

the Persians, who had been hostilely disposed towards the church.

The venerable Theodoret, bishop of Cyros, on the Euphrates, invited a heathen inhabitant of his city to a festival commemorating the consecration of a church, a general popular feast, at the same time addressing him with these expressions of love: "I would fain invite you, not only as a fellow-citizen, but as a brother in the faith; that, however, your prepossessions will not allow. On this account I only make use of the claims of a common country, and invite you to participate in the friendly blessing of the holy prophets and apostles (to whose names this church is dedicated), for this participation is hindered by no separation."

As the Apostle Paul represents the Jews requiring a sign, and the Greeks seeking after wisdom, as occupying the two antagonist stand-points to Christianity, so in all ages these two tendencies have opposed Christianity—either a sensuousness predominating above the religious elements, which would reduce the divine to sensuous conceptions, or a one-sided spirituality which would stifle the genuine actings of the heart, a false, arrogant refinement.

To the first class belonged those persons among the heathen who, in order to believe, required new sensible miracles, and who urged the want of miracles in that age, for the purpose of throwing doubt on the miracles of Christ and his apostles. They failed to perceive the greatest of all miracles, though it stood before their eyes—the existence of the church which referred back, as its necessary antecedent, to the miracle of the appearance of Christ, and his power of operating through the apostles. They failed to understand the miracle of the transformation of mankind by Christianity. To such men Augustin says: "Why are there no longer such miracles? Because they would make no impression, if they were no longer extraordinary, and if they happened commonly, they would no longer be extraordinary. For suppose any one for the first time to observe the alternation of day and night, the undeviating order in the course of the heavenly bodies, the changes of the four seasons of the year, the fall and renewal of the foliage, the beauty of the light, the variety of colours and sounds,—and he will be overwhelmed with

miracles. But we regard with unconcern all these things, not because they are so easily explained; for what is more obscure than the course of them all? but because we are accustomed to see them constantly. Those other miracles therefore happened at the right time, in order that, after the multitude of believers had been once collected and spread abroad, what had been introduced to mankind by higher authority might pass into their general habits. But habit has such power over the souls of men, that we ourselves can sooner blame and abhor the bad which has become habitual, than renounce or alter it. Is it a little thing gained for mankind, when not merely a few learned men prove it, but when the illiterate multitude of both sexes believe and announce it in so many different nations—that the honour belonging to God is not to be given to any object of the senses, but that men must rise with spiritual worship to him alone." He then describes the effects of Christianity in the spread of continence, self-sacrificing benevolence, contempt of death, renunciation of the world, longing after eternal life, and then adds: "Indeed, a few only practise this in such a degree, still fewer in a right manner and with sound wisdom: but the people hear this, the people praise it and love it; they lament their weakness that they cannot reach such a standard, and this indicates a certain tendency to the soul of God, some sparks of virtue." In this agreement of general opinion he recognizes the power with which Christianity had moulded the moral sentiments of mankind. And in his work on the true religion, having quoted the elevated language of the moral precepts in the New Testament, he says: "When this was read throughout the world, and listened to with profoundest reverence; when after so much blood had been shed, after so many funeral piles, the churches had spread so abundantly, even to barbarous nations; when this had been so received, that though heretofore it had appeared as something unheard of to promulgate such precepts, it now seemed strange to utter anything different; when in cities and in the country, withdrawal from earthly things and the direction of the mind to one God was so openly urged and aimed at, that daily, throughout the world, men almost unanimously answer, 'We have raised our hearts to the Lord (by the Holy Supper), why should we still sleep in the confusion of

the past, and seek divine revelations in dead beasts (the *haruspicia*), and why should we always be repeating the name of Plato, instead of having our hearts full of divine truth?'"

Such wonder-seekers who could not recognize the miracles of the present that pointed to the past, often unexpectedly encountered the power of Christianity in the life in such experiences as subdued the opposition of their hearts. Many Roman heathens, who had often accused the Christian age, were forced to seek protection, when Alaric, the general of the Goths, captured Rome in the year 410, among the praying, psalm-singing Christians in the churches (as those of St. Peter and St. Paul), the only edifices that were spared amidst the general havoc and devastation; and they were rescued by the piety of those that surrounded them, so that they were filled with gratitude towards those whose name had protected them, and left the churches with far different feelings from those that they entered them with. Augustin on this account exclaims: "He must be blind who does not see that for this we are indebted to the name of Christ, and to the times of Christianity. Whoever sees it, and does not bless God, is ungrateful!" He recognized here the power of Christ's name, even over the rudest natures.

To the class above described belonged those persons who, through a rhetorical-æsthetic or philosophic training, had been turned aside from simplicity of mind, so that they could not apprehend the divine power and wisdom of the Holy Scriptures, appearing in a humble form; along with the mythical popular religion, full of sensuous glitter, they wanted a speculative mystical theology for the highly educated. The later Neo-Platonic philosophy gave them both, which for a long while had its enthusiastic adherents.

One of these men, in the beginning of the fourth century, was Victorinus, who had acquired great reputation in Rome by his acquaintance with ancient literature and his lectures on the ancient philosophers; after he had been zealously devoted for many years to this philosophic heathenism, he became acquainted in his old age with the sacred Scriptures, and the more he read them, the more he was convinced of the truth of their contents. At first he endeavoured to amalgamate Christianity with his former habits of thinking. He was also ashamed openly to avow his regard for that gospel

which his distinguished friends ridiculed as foolishness, and was afraid to offend them. But he often said in confidence to his Christian friend the presbyter Simplician, that he was already a Christian. The answer he always received was: "I shall not believe it, nor number you among the Christians, till I see you in a Christian church." Victorinus used to rejoin in a sarcastic tone: "Do church-walls then make a Christian?" He thought probably, like the individual whom Augustin describes in one of his sermons: "It is enough for me to worship God in spirit; why need I go into a church, or connect myself visibly with Christians?" Yet as his faith became more living and strong, he felt himself compelled in his conscience to make an open profession. He came one day unexpectedly to his friend Simplician, and said to him, to his great joy: "Come, let us go together to the church; I will become a Christian." When he was to be baptized, and was about to repeat previously the confession of faith drawn up in precise terms and learnt by heart, they wished to allow him not to repeat it publicly, as was usual, before a numerous assembly, but only in the presence of a few; but he said, "I was not ashamed formerly to deliver publicly what could not give me salvation; why should I now be afraid publicly to express that in which alone I can find salvation?" With great cheerfulness and confidence he then repeated the confession of faith. The apparent resuscitation of heathenism under the reign of the Emperor Julian could not seduce him. When this emperor, unjustly displeased that Christianity had brought under its control all forms of culture, and even employed in its service the ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, forbade the Christians to keep open schools of literature and rhetoric, Victorinus gladly ceased to practise as a rhetorician, and wrote in defence of the truths of Christianity.

One of the noblest and most devout men among the adherents of the religious system grounded on the Platonic philosophy, at the beginning of the fifth century, was Synesius of Cyrene, in Africa. He was very far from charging, like many prejudiced heathens, on the Christian religion itself, the wickedness of its hypocritical professors. His religious sensibility perceived something divine in Christianity, and he distinguished this from the undivine, which, as it has everywhere disturbed the revelation of the divine in this lower

world, so also its revelation in Christianity. But to him all religions appeared as manifold veiled appearances of the divine; he sought everywhere with earnestness for the common, the universal religious ideas; and he recognized everywhere with esteem and favour the religious disposition wherever he met with it, in every manner and under every form of its manifestation. Thus he wrote while still a heathen to a friend who had become a Christian monk: "I need not begin with wishing thee good health, since thou hast forsaken us men who are burying ourselves in the dark in a sinful world, and involved in earthly cares, and hast raised thyself above us, and though still living in the world, hast withdrawn from the world, and laid hold of a blessed life—if it be true what a friend has told me, that thou hast betaken thyself to the monastic life; that thou only visitest the city in order to fetch books, and those only which refer to divine things; and that thou hast assumed the black cloak (*φαιὸν τριβωνιον*, the dress of Christian monks, as *λευκὸν τριβώνιον*, the white cloak, was the dress of heathen philosophers and ascetics). It would indeed be quite as well if it were the white cloak; for to heavenly light the most pure and lightsome of the objects of sense might most naturally be appropriated. But since, following some of thy elders, thou hast preferred the black colour, I reckon this, like everything else, good which has a reference to the divine; for the good consists in that on account of which anything is done, and virtue depends on the disposition." He also attached such ideas to many heathen forms of religion, which he did not acquire from them, but had drawn from his own religious consciousness, to which already much had been transferred from the Christian circle in which he lived. Yet he was still far from that poverty of spirit which leads men to Christ. Living in silent contemplation, he was satisfied with his own ideal world: he felt himself happy among his books; in intercourse with a few congenial friends; in an esoteric union of four individuals agreeing in their religious and philosophic habits of thinking (his sacred quaternion, *ἱερὰ τετρακτύς*); in blameless pleasures; in the succour which his property, talents, and influence could render to the afflicted and oppressed, which was a source of peculiar joy to his benevolent heart. In his outward circumstances there was little that could remind him of

the poverty, the misery, or the weakness of man. As he had few conflicts from without to endure which might have called forth in him a deeper consciousness of sin, so by the peculiar constitution of his mind he belonged to that class in whom it is difficult to develop such a consciousness. He was not inclined to sensuality, not moved by ambition; in general, he was not a man of warm passions; his predominant tendency was to philosophic contemplation; yet even this in itself, so noble, when the way to heaven by the cross has not been discovered, may become a pillow on which the "old man" may repose. He felt indeed, when he wished to rise to the contemplation of the divine, the mastership of a foreign power which dragged down to earth the heaven-allied spirit of man; but he sought for the cause of it, not in the corruption of his inward nature, but in a foreign element—the gross earthly matter by which the heavenly essence was detained as in a prison. He attributed this foreign element to the influence of demons, to whom man had been subjected by his connection with it. But these demons again were not spirits fallen from the holy God by their own will, but only the progeny of that material principle, that blind power of nature, the antagonist of reason, law, and order, with which the divine, as it revealed itself in this world, was at continual war. Hence blind desire and passion formed the peculiar essence of these demons; they infused into men who were brought under their sway desires and passions, by means of their connection with matter. Synesius sought, therefore, redemption from the power of matter and its demons, but not redemption from sin. The spirit sought to be freed from the bondage of matter. Yet even in this conflict he might be made aware of his want of strength. And this might be the transition-point to a sense of the need of redemption, although the right understanding of what redemption is might not yet exist.

In moments when he felt himself oppressed in spirit by a foreign power, and checked in rising to the divine, he turned himself in prayer, with tears of anxious longing, to a purifying, redeeming, conciliating God (*θεὸς ῥύσιος, μειλίχιος, καθάρσιος*), to whom he felt himself drawn in his heart; he sought this redeeming God on high; he did not yet know the redeeming God who appeared in lowliness, and who is nigh to the lowly. The heavenly Father, who in every nation is not far from any

one who fears and loves him, and acts right, as far as he is able, did not leave himself without witness when out of the fulness of his heart he prayed to him, and thereby strengthened him in his faith. He who draws the hearts of men to his Son, in order to impart himself to them through him, and in him grants them to find rest—he drew Synesius by many experiences, which at the time were painful. An embassy to the imperial court, which he had undertaken for his native city, forced him to spend three years full of care and disquietude at Constantinople. It was the most melancholy time he had ever had in his life; he to whom, as to every noble-minded man, freedom was the sweetest of all earthly things, was obliged to sacrifice even this to duty, to subject himself to a variety of harassing engagements, to beg for an audience with persons of rank or the emperor, and to pass nights on a carpet before the palace. Here he sought consolation in God; he went into all the churches, fell on his knees, and prayed with tears that his journey might not be in vain. He had the opportunity of hearing the discourses of a Chrysostom, which could hardly fail of affecting his heart. By the consolation which he found in Christian churches, and by his frequent attendance on the public worship of Christians, Christianity itself gained easier access to his heart. Although still mixing heathen and Christian views, he prayed after his return, when he again trod on his native soil, that God would unite him closer to himself by baptism. "Father, thou fountain of heavenly wisdom," he prayed, "let spiritual light shine into my heart from thy bosom; show me the holy path that leads to thee; give me the sign; impress thy seal upon me."

Synesius, owing to the confidence placed in him by his fellow-citizens, was appointed bishop of Ptolemais before he had arrived at the simplicity of faith, and while still occupying a middle point between Platonism and Christianity. On many grounds he strove to decline the office. The subjects with which he had occupied himself only in quiet solitude, on which he had been used to converse only with the most confidential and congenial friends, these he must now discuss as the common property of the unlearned and the educated, of the ignorant and the philosophic, and explain them in a manner intelligible to all. He was also convinced that man

could only please God through that truth which was allied to him, and durst not come into God's sanctuary with falsehood; he wished, therefore, not to conceal that his sentiments contradicted the doctrine of the church on many points, and felt compelled to express them frankly before those persons on whom the impartation of the episcopal dignity depended. But the pious clergy indulged the confident hope that He who perfects what he has begun would carry on the work of grace that had commenced in this individual. And the disposition with which Synesius at last accepted the office served to justify this expectation; for he was resolved to sacrifice his own dearest inclinations to that God to whom obedience, the sacrifice of self-will, is the most acceptable offering, as soon as it appeared clear to him, from the leading of circumstances, that God had called him to this office, especially when he found that the open avowal of his scruples had no effect in setting aside his nomination.

"Much as I hate," he said, "public offices and cares, yet I will undertake this onerous office, though with pain, as soon as God lays it upon me." Although the concerns of the episcopal office necessarily deprived him of the rest and leisure of a life devoted to meditation, yet he was convinced that if God, who called him to this office, were with him, it would not withdraw him from that wisdom after which he strove, but rather lead him to a higher stage of it. Indeed, he might justly expect, that what he had not yet discovered by meditation and study, would be learned in living experience, in daily intercourse with holy things, since he brought with him an earnest mind, turned to God and impressed with the dignity of the office. To those who had chosen him to the episcopate, he wrote thus: "I did not overcome you at first when I used every means in my power to avoid the episcopal dignity, and now you have not overcome me, but it is the leading of God which has brought matters to their present issue. I would rather have died many times over than undertake this office; for I believed myself unequal to such labour. But since God has brought about, not what I prayed for, but what he willed, it is my prayer that he who has allotted me this kind of life will be also my guide in performing its duties. For how should I, since from my youth I have lived in philosophic leisure and in the peaceful contemplation of

Truth, and have only experienced so much care as was absolutely unavoidable, if one has anything to do with worldly and civil life—how should I be equal to incessant cares? Or how shall I, if I engage in a variety of affairs, be able to attend to those spiritual and sublime objects which can only be enjoyed in a state of happy repose? I know not how this can be, yet we are told that with God all things are possible, even what appears impossible. Therefore lift up your hands to God; pray for me, and require the whole church in town and country to pray for me; for if I am not forsaken by God, I shall find that the priesthood, so far from leading me away from philosophy, will lead me to a higher stage of it." What he here asserts, he experienced in fact, although in a different way from what he expected: God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts. In fact, God led him, by what he experienced during his episcopate, in the way of the cross, nearer to the end of true living wisdom.

In his episcopal office he met with a variety of domestic and public trials, which lead the heart to that Being who alone can help and cure—such as the devastation of the country by war, the loss of beloved children, and other calamities affecting his church. We cannot trace his subsequent life with sufficient accuracy to decide what progress he made in Christian knowledge. From his zeal for the doctrine of the Trinity, which at an earlier period he had no scruple in admitting, and which he could easily by his Platonic philosophy explain in his own way, we cannot draw conclusions respecting his views of Christian truth as a whole, for a doctrine of the Trinity poured into the crucible of a certain philosophy does not make Christians; but we might gather more from the fact that in one of his letters he grounds the dignity of man not so much on his heaven-allied nature* as on Christ's dying for men on the cross.

While in this excellent man the transition from Platonism to Christianity was gradually formed without our remarking any decided crisis, and a new section in his life proceeding

* As in those words of his prayer—"I bear in me thy seed, the sparks of the Spirit, which is of heavenly origin." This consciousness has a foundation in truth; only, he who experiences it must not forget that man by sin has lost that nobility of descent, and that it must be renovated.

from it, we see, on the other hand, in the instance of a man, who was afterwards a distinguished father of the church, Augustin, how a new great section of a life, penetrated altogether by the spirit of Christianity, resulted from a long preparatory process. The life of this individual shows us many periods of development in mankind considered as a whole, and we recognize in him the wonderful methods by which Infinite Wisdom knows how to form its instruments.

We have already remarked that Augustin in early childhood received into his heart the seeds of Christianity from his loving and pious mother, Monica. But this seed was not all at once to germinate and bring forth fruit. There was in his nature, great but yet wild power which needed to be tamed by the higher power of the divine Spirit, and led into another direction; a raging earthly fire, which required to be purified into a heavenly flame. It happened here that the seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and for a while choked it (Matt. xiii.). When the passions and desires of youth began to stir within him, ambition spurred him on, and he entered into the amusements and dissipation of a large city, Carthage, where he studied rhetoric; gradually he became alienated from the pious direction of his childhood, and from the God to whom his pious mother had so early dedicated him; he was carried away into the world to indulge in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.

It often happens that amidst the darkness to which man surrenders himself, a ray of light is sent by that divine grace which trains the soul by outward and inward appliances; and if he does not yet firmly retain it, nor follow immediately the call of grace, yet a restless anxiety remains in his bosom when he has been once touched by Heaven, and this anxiety urges and disturbs him till he attains that which can alone give him inward rest and satisfaction. So it happened with Augustin. In his nineteenth year, in the course of his rhetorical studies, he met with Cicero's Hortensius, which contained an exhortation to the study of philosophy. All at once the futility of the objects that had hitherto fascinated him struck his mind, and it seemed evident that philosophy and the knowledge of truth formed the only worthy ends of human exertion. "Suddenly," as he himself confesses,

"every vain hope seemed to be annihilated, and with an incredulous movement of the heart I longed after imperishable wisdom, and I began to stand up in order to return to thee, my God." This longing after truth and wisdom, without his being aware, impelled him to that God in whom alone he could find truth and wisdom; but yet the way that would lead to him was wanting. He was indeed on the point of rightly explaining this anxiety and of seeking for its satisfaction from him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Awakening recollections of his childhood drew him in the same direction. "Since my heart while yet tender had taken in the Saviour's name with my mother's milk, and had received so deep an impression of it, nothing which was without this name, however beautiful and refined it might appear, could captivate me."

He applied therefore to the volume of which his heart in childhood had received so many salutary impressions—the Bible; but he was still too little trained to simplicity and humility, and too much blinded by appearances, in order to receive greatness in the form of a servant. "My pride," he says of himself, "was ashamed of thy lowliness, and my vision could not penetrate into thy interior. It was thy method to manifest thy greatness to the little; but I was ashamed to be little, and inflated with pride I appeared to myself to be great." And in a sermon which he delivered when a bishop, he says, "When first of all, as a youth, I brought to the study of the Holy Scriptures rather a prying acuteness, than a spirit of devout, truth-loving investigation, I closed my Lord's door against myself by my perverted state of mind. Instead of knocking that it might be opened to me, I rather acted so that it might remain closed against me; for I ventured to seek with a lofty spirit what can only be found by humility." In this state of mind he met with persons belonging to the sect of the Manicheans, who ridiculed the blind submission to authority in ordinary Christians, and promised him, if he allowed himself to be initiated into their sect, instead of faith, a perfect knowledge, which would resolve all doubts and remove all difficulties. Such a promise must have alarmed the inexperienced, on account of the obscurity which the Holy Scripture must at that time have had; while it would be very attractive to a youth who was

fired by an ardent curiosity. The enigmatical mysteries of this sect must also have allured his imaginative faculty. As the sensuous disposition of the natural man expresses itself either in a dread of miracles or a longing for them, so that either he seizes with a superficial mind what lies on the surface, prefers clearness without depth, will neither dig into the deep nor raise himself on high, and rejects without examination as full of mystery whatever goes beyond the circle of his common experiences or representations; or he seeks for deep wisdom in everything which announces itself as mysterious and enigmatical, while he holds as foolishness divine wisdom, becauses it appears in simple attire. In the sect of the Manicheans there were two degrees—the *hearers* (*auditores*), from whom the key to their mysteries was kept concealed, and the *elect* (*electi*), to whom the heights of wisdom were to be exhibited in all their extent. How were Augustin's expectations fixed on the time when he was to receive the disclosure of the mysteries as one of the elect! He seized with his whole soul what he could learn in the first stage from the lessons of the Manicheans; but all that he learned made him neither wiser nor better. He remained in a state of conflict with himself, that unhappy distraction which the apostle has so vividly depicted from his own experience in Rom. vii.

For eight years he was thus harassed. Meanwhile many difficulties in the Manichean doctrine were brought to his view. He betook himself to Faustus, at Carthage, a leader of the Manichean sect, noted for his genius and acuteness. He sought an interview with him, but found not what he hoped for. Disappointed hope had made him wander into Manicheism; but as it not unfrequently happens, when a person has hoped to find certain truth in a system to which he has devoted himself, and yet is deceived in his expectations, he at last becomes distrustful of everything which professes to be truth; so it happened that Augustin was now in danger of giving himself up to total scepticism. Yet a longing after truth, deeply seated in his soul, called him back from this despair, and since under all the vacillation of his opinions he had firmly retained faith in God, he derived fresh hope and fresh courage from the thought that God would not leave unsatisfied a want which he had implanted

so deeply in the spirit of man allied to himself: accordingly he often prayed to Him, the only witness of his internal conflict, with many tears that he would reveal to Him the way of truth. Recollections of the impressions of his childhood admonished him to seek this way in Christianity. "Would, indeed," he thought to himself, "God have allowed this religion to conquer after so many conflicts, and to have accomplished so much for the transformation of mankind, if he had not appointed it as the way to truth and salvation for men who are uncertain, wavering, and driven hither and thither in their opinions!" While he was in this state of mind, he heard the discourses of Ambrose, the venerable bishop of Milan, which had a powerful effect on his mind and heart. He would fain have believed, but his scepticism would not permit him to believe. There was a strife between his understanding and his heart. As he was always afraid lest he should be again deceived if he arrived at a conclusion too soon, he wished to have a sensible certainty of divine things, such a certainty as he had that "three and seven made ten."

The Neo-Platonic philosophy, with which he became acquainted during this period of mental agitation, had an important influence on Augustin's mental tendencies. It became for him a transition-point, from Manicheism and scepticism, to a Christian mode of thinking on both divine and human things. He found in it many ideas allied to Christianity, though they had not the impress of what was peculiarly Christian, since they wanted the real historical element. Christianity rests, indeed, not on ideas, but on facts. The first verse of John's gospel, respecting "the Word that was with God and was God," and "by whom all things were made," became intelligible to him by means of this philosophy; but the way to the Word who became flesh, and dwelt among men, and gave power to as many as received him to become the sons of God—this way he found not. Like Synesius he sought for God, whom he acknowledged as the highest good of men, who were attracted to him by the innermost necessities of their moral and spiritual nature—he sought for him *on high*. Augustin thus expresses himself: "That souls could only receive felicity from the fulness of the eternal Word—that they could be received to wisdom

through communion with the eternal Wisdom,—this is to be found there. But that he in time should die for the ungodly, and that thou hast not spared thy own Son, but given him up for us all, that is not to be found there; for this thou hast hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes—that all who are weary and heavy-laden should come to him, and he can receive them; for he is meek and lowly of heart, and he teaches his way to the meek, since he sees our lowliness and wretchedness, and forgives all our sins. But those who are puffed up by the pride of a doctrine which pretends to be something superior—they will not hear Him who calls to them, 'Learn of me, who am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls;' although they know God, they glorify him not as God, but are become vain in their imaginations." Already Augustin sought a method of uniting this philosophy—which filled him with an enthusiasm for divine things, though deficient in power—with the religion of his childhood; already he constructed out of this philosophy a Christ of his own, whom he conceived of as a man peculiarly enlightened by God, and a Christianity consisting of certain ideas. He spoke of divine things like an experienced person without having experience. "Already," he says, referring to his state at that time, "I wished to pass for a philosopher, and bore my punishment in myself and yet wept not. Where was, then, the love built on the foundation of humility, which is Jesus Christ?" Yet this philosophy could not impart power to make him master over those passions with which, ten years before, ever since the first awakening of his longing after the higher life, he had maintained such a conflict. He still remained between God and the world, inspired by a lofty ideal (as he renounced, for example, all earthly things, and wished to live with his friends in a Platonic society, devoted wholly to the investigation of truth, so that no one should be anxious about his bodily wants, but be supplied out of a common chest), and he believed that in many moment of higher elevation he had seized this ideal; but it always vanished when the power of passion and of counteracting circumstances brought him back to the common realities of life. For the living and enlivening ideal on which life forms itself is not the transient paroxysm

of poetic inspiration, but faith in the Word revealed in flesh, in whom the ideal is realised, in whom heaven, the great source of the ideal, is joined to earth. Augustin thus expresses himself on this point: "I sought the way to a happy communion with God, and could not find it until I embraced the mediator between God and man, 'the man Jesus Christ;' even Him who has said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' I did not stay myself upon my Lord Jesus, humbly on the humble One, and I knew not what was to be learned from his weakness. For thy word, the eternal truth, exalted above the whole creation, draws those which are under its influence to itself; it has built itself a mean habitation from the mud of our earth, in order to humble us, to free us from ourselves, and to incorporate us with itself, to cure our pride and nourish our love, that we may not proceed further in self-confidence, but rather become weak by the contemplation of the Deity descending to our weakness, that we may prostrate ourselves exhausted before it, and that then it may raise us up." And such was the discipline through which Augustin had to pass. It was necessary for him to be filled with a sense of his misery and weakness, to despair altogether of himself in order to experience the power of the Redeemer in his inmost soul. He needed to become absolutely and entirely weak in himself, ere he could be strong in the Lord. This was the important decisive point for his whole life, to which he was brought by a variety of inward and outward experiences, under the direction of that God who, in the guidance of free agents, discovers his infinite wisdom.

From the study of the Platonists, Augustin passed to that of the Scriptures, from which he had been deterred eleven years before. When he now came to the Bible, he had not arrived at the conviction that here the only source of true knowledge in divine things was to be found; but since he felt himself drawn to the religion of his childhood by a deeply seated impulse of his heart, he imagined, that as he believed that he had found the highest wisdom in the Platonic philosophy, he must find the same truth, only in another form, and this agreement would confirm him so much the more in his conviction; and that one among the sacred writers, with

whom he first became acquainted, was exactly the person to whom he felt most allied in his mental constitution and course of life, in whom he found those views most prominent which were the most needful to him in his internal state at that time, and which the Platonic philosophy could not give. This writer was the Apostle Paul. Here he learnt to know and judge himself; here he learnt the difference between an idle, merely an apparent pleasure in divine things, and a life in God; what a chasm between the ideal, in the contemplation of which the spirit delights itself, and the realisation of the same in life. He arrived at the conviction that it is of no avail for a man to delight in the law of God after the inward man; for what must he do with the law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into subjection to the law of sin which is in his members? Here he learnt that the great point is for man to learn the way by which he may attain, not only to see God afar off, but to be cured of his sins in order to become a habitation of the holy God. Here he learnt to exclaim, "Miserable man, what can he do? Who can free him from his misery? Only the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the handwriting that is against us is blotted out."

While Augustin was occupied in comparing the Platonic philosophy with the theology of the Apostle Paul, and engaged in close conflict with himself, impelled in contrary directions by the law of the spirit and the law in his members, a fellow-countryman, Pontitian, who held a distinguished office at court, came to visit him. His astonishment to find, not an ancient heathen author, but the Apostle Paul lying on the table, gave the conversation a turn to religious subjects; amongst others, to the monastic institution, in which at that time all earnest minds took a deep interest, since this was then the *form* in which the earnest inward Christian life expressed itself, in opposition to a lightminded worldly life, that was more heathenish than Christian. Pontitian on this occasion gave the following narration to his friend, who listened with deep attention: "It happened that I came in the emperor's retinue to Treves. While the emperor witnessed the exhibitions at the circus, in the afternoon I went with

three of my colleagues and friends to walk in the gardens near the city walls. We went two together. Two of us went before, and came to a hermit's cell. Here we found the life of Anthony, the father of monks. One of us read, and was so affected that he exclaimed, full of the sense of the nothingness of his endeavours, which had hitherto been directed to worldly splendour and honour—'What do we intend by all our labour? Can we desire anything higher at court than the favour of the emperor? And when shall I obtain it? But if I wish to be a friend of God, I can be so in an instant.' He at once renounced the service of the court and remained there as a hermit, in order to be occupied only with divine things."

This story, which his friend told Augustin without any special design, made a decided impression on his mind, in accordance with his state of feeling at the time. During a conflict which had lasted twelve years, he had not mastered the desires and passions that attached him to the world, nor had been able to come to a resolution which that person arrived at in an instant, by a firm direction of the will! "How long," said he, "do we fight with all our knowledge against flesh and blood, when here a man, without philosophy, gives up all worldly follies in an instant!" Carried away by this reflection, filled with anguish and shame for himself, he hastened into the garden, and threw himself down under a fig-tree. His internal state stood exposed before his eyes; with fervent weeping he poured forth his heart before God, without being able to find comfort. He heard in an adjoining house a child's voice repeatedly cry out—"Take and read!" He regarded these words as a direction from heaven,—he snatched up the Bible which he had left on a bench in the garden, and applied to himself the first words he found as a watch-word given by the Lord. He opened it, and the first words that met his eyes were those in Rom. xiii. 14, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." These words diffused at once, repose, clearness, and confidence in his inmost soul. He now knew what he had to do.—to forget the things that were behind and renounce self, to resign himself to the Redeemer, who had called him to himself—to submit to his guidance, and in him to forget himself. The few moments in which he

formed these resolutions, owed their incalculable importance to their connection with the whole preceding development of his life, including so many different stages.

CHAPTER II.

NOMINAL AND GENUINE CHRISTIANS—SEPARATISM—VARIOUS REVIVALS OF CHRISTIANITY—THE INFLUENCE OF PIOUS MOTHERS.

SINCE so many persons, as we have seen in the foregoing pages, became converts to Christianity merely from outward considerations, or remained in communion with the church merely from the force of habit, we cannot be surprised that on such persons Christianity could not evince its sanctifying power. Hence the great mass of those persons who formed no just conceptions of the nature of Christianity, and of the Christian calling, supposed that they had done enough by frequenting the churches on the principal religious festivals, and looked upon serious occupation with the concerns of Christianity as belonging only to the clergy and to monks. This led Chrysostom to complain that the churches which were thronged on feast-days, on other occasions were visited only by a few. "Where are now," he says, "those who thronged to us at the feasts? I mourn for them, when I think how many brethren I have lost, how few pay attention to their salvation, and how the great part of the body of the church resembles a corpse." In another homily, he says, in reference to people who supposed that reading the Bible was not their business: "I always exhort and shall never cease to exhort you, not merely to read the Bible here in church, but also occupy your time in reading it at home, and I would also have you pay attention to it in your private meetings. For let no one utter those cold and culpable words, 'I must always be at the court; I have civil business to manage; I have a trade to carry on; I have a wife and children to support;

domestic affairs demand my attention; I am a man of business; it is not my concern to read the Holy Scriptures, but theirs who have renounced the world, who have withdrawn to the top of the mountain.' What dost thou say, O man? Is it not thy business to occupy thyself with the Bible, when thou art surrounded by a thousand cares? On the contrary, thou needest it more than other persons. They are at rest, as if in port. But we who are driven about on the ocean of life, require continual exhortation from Holy Writ. They are far from the scene of conflict; thou art in the midst of the combat, and art continually receiving fresh wounds; hence thou needest more means of salvation. Many cares, many inducements to anger or to sorrow, much nourishment of vanity and pride, much suffering surrounds us on all sides; a thousand darts are directed against us from every quarter. Hence we continually need the whole armour of the Holy Scriptures." As in the apostolic age, those Christians who distinguished themselves from the corrupt heathen world by their serious and strict life, were ridiculed by the heathen as gloomy enthusiasts; so now those persons were ridiculed by light-minded nominal Christians, who were not satisfied to confess the Saviour with their lips, but felt impelled by the inspiration of faith to follow him in their practice. Augustin says, "As whoever among the heathen resolves to be a Christian, meets with harsh language, so those among Christians who wish to be better Christians, and to be strict in their Christianity, suffer reproaches from their fellow-Christians. And of what use is it, my brother, that thou hast found a place where there is no heathen? No one calumniates Christians here, excepting Christians, since here not a single heathen, is to be found; but there are many Christians who are leading bad lives. And whoever dwelling near them, wishes to live a truly Christian life, to be sober among the intemperate, to be chaste among the unchaste,—among those who consult astrologers, to worship God sincerely, and to keep clear of such practices,—to go only to church, among the lovers of pleasure who flock only to the theatre,—he will find his calumniators among Christians themselves, and must endure many a hard word from them. They say, 'Thou great man, thou saint, thou art, to be sure, an Elijah, a Peter; thou art indeed come down from heaven!'" And in another

sermon the same father says:* "Whoever begins to live to God, to despise the world, not to wish to revenge himself for injuries inflicted, not to long after the riches of this world, not to seek earthly good here, but to contemn it, to think of the Lord alone, not to turn aside from Christ's ways—of such not only do the heathen say, 'He is mad,' but what is still more to be lamented, since in the church itself so many sleep and will not wake, they say of their own people, their fellow-Christians, 'What has happened to thee? Why dost thou live so? Wilt thou be alone a Christian? Why dost thou not do what others do? Why art thou not present at the shows, like others? Why dost thou not use charms and amulets (*remedia et ligaturas*)? Why dost thou not consult soothsayers and astrologers, like other people?'" And elsewhere he says, "He calls on Christ aright who says, not with his lips but with his life, 'The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' He begins to despise the world, to esteem as nothing what men love; he despises injuries; he seeks no revenge; he prays for his enemies. When he begins to act in this manner, all his relations and friends are in an uproar. Those who love the world gainsay him: 'Why dost thou act like a madman? Thou art extravagant. Are other people no Christians? This is folly, madness.'" Augustin here spoke of what he had experienced at the turning-point of his own life, and added from his own experience, for the benefit of those who wished not to place themselves on a level with the world, "I will tell you what many besides myself have experienced in the name of Christ; for the church does not cease to let such go forth from her bosom. When a Christian first begins to live piously, to show a glowing zeal in good works, to despise the world, he finds, since his mode of life strikes them as a novelty, that lukewarm Christians treat him with reproach and contradiction.

* Incipiat mundum contemnere, inopi sua distribuere, nihilo habere quæ homines amant, contemnat injurias, non appetat vindicari, paret maxillam percutienti, oret pro inimicis; si quis ei abstulerit sua, non repetat; si quid alicui abstulerit, reddat quadruplum. Cum ista facere cœperit omnes sui cognati, affines, amici commoventur. Qui diligunt sæculum, contradicunt. Quid insanis? Nimius es; numquid alii non sunt Christiani? Ista stultitia est, ista dementia est.—August. *Serm.* 88, § 12, 13.

But if he persists and conquers them by endurance, is not negligent of good works, then, at last, those who before would have hindered him begin to imitate him; for they find fault, bluster and exclaim against him as long as they can hope to make him give way. But if they see themselves conquered by his persistency, they turn round and begin to say, 'A great, a holy man! how happy is he whom God has so blessed.'"

Those persons who were animated with the fire of holy zeal inthe midst of a generation of cold and lukewarm Christians would have acted best to let their light shine in their midst, and to testify among them, by word and conduct, of the virtues of him who had called them out of darkness into his marvellous light, in order to attract others to him who dwelt and operated within them. But many in the first glow of their awakening fled into the deserts, in order to escape the prevalent corruption, since their ardour could not endure the indifference of other professed Christians to divine things, and they were filled with disgust at the moral corruption of a world glossed over with a semblance of Christianity; others, who could not deny the necessity of Christian communion and outward activity, united themselves with like-minded persons, in a state of separation from other society, in a convent; others altogether renounced the church, and maintained that on account of the wickedness tolerated in it, it had ceased to be a genuine church of Christ, for such an one must necessarily be pure and holy, and they sought to form for themselves a church bearing this mark. But all these classes of persons forgot that it is the calling of Christians, not to flee outwardly from the world, but as Vigilantius, the opponent of monkery, rightly observed, to combat it in dependence on Him who said to his disciples, and equally to all believers: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world;" and who prayed for them to his Father: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." They forgot that the Christian, as long as he is in the world, has to combat with the world, whether it be the world pressing upon him from without, or the world in his own bosom, a far more dangerous enemy, and but for which

all the power of evil pressing upon him from without could not injure him. They do not consider that in this world a pure and holy church, *in itself*, can as little be found as a pure and holy man *in himself;* that he alone finds true purity and holiness, who, forgeting and denying himself, seeks them in his Lord, who will appropriate to him his own holiness; that everywhere, in every individual believer, as well as in every collective body, great or small, the tares grow up with the corn; that it is the Christian's calling to take all possible care of the good fruit, and to preserve it pure; to guard against the spread of the tares, but that, above all, he has to guard himself against a self-willed, intolerant zeal, which, before all things are ripe for harvest, would separate the tares from the wheat. Against such a tendency as that last mentioned, Gregory of Nazianzen says: "Thou mayst pull up at the same time with the tares the concealed wheat, and wheat perhaps more valuable than thyself." And Augustin says very admirably against the same tendencies: "Whither should the Christian withdraw in order not to sigh among false brethren? Must he betake himself to the desert? Offences will follow him there. Must the far-advanced Christian wholly separate himself, in order to endure the presence of no man? What, although no one would endure him, before he was so far advanced? If, therefore, because he is so far advanced he will endure no man, the very fact of his not bearing with others convicts him of the contrary, and proves that he is not an advanced Christian. Mark what the apostle says (Eph. iv. 2): 'Forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' 'Forbearing one another,' he says. Hast thou nothing in thyself which another must bear with? I should be surprised if it were so. But supposing it were so, thou art so much the stronger to bear with others, if thou hast nothing in thee for others to bear with. Thou needest not to be borne, only do thou bear others. Thou sayest, 'I cannot.' Then hast thou that in thee which others must bear with; for it is said, 'Forbearing one another in love.' Thou forsakest human things, and keepest thyself aloof that none may see thee. To whom wilt thou be of use? Wouldst thou have attained to that had no one been of use to thee?" He then addresses himself particularly to those who, in order not to give up Chris-

tian communion along with their separation from the world, connected themselves with like-minded persons in a cloister. "Withdrawn from the bustle of the world, they are, as it were, in a harbour. Do they find there the pure and promised joy? Not yet; but still sighing, still the misery of temptations. What should prevent a bad man from finding entrance there? Do all come with their hearts laid open to view? The comers do not know themselves; how much less canst thou know them? Wilt thou exclude the bad brethren from the society of the good? Thou, who talkest thus, exclude, if thou canst, all evil thoughts from thy own heart. We all wish for strong hearts in which nothing evil gains entrance. But who knows whence the evil has gained entrance? And we have daily conflicts in each of our own hearts. Where is security? Never here; never in this life, but in the hope inspired by God's promises. But there, when we have arrived there, will be perfect security, when the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem shall be closed and the bars of its gates made fast, then there will be a full jubilee and great joy." Golden words, these! All extravagant requirements from others in the world generally arise from this, that man is a stranger to himself; that he does not know how much he has yet to deplore on his own account, and to amend in himself, and that he who would enjoy heaven upon earth cannot eat bread in the sweat of his brow. Augustin shows how easily those—who have not observed that here below evil always stands at the side of good—who know not how to distinguish the church triumphant from the church militant, nor the invisible church, the assembly of the saints, from the visible church, and hence wish to have the ideal here—such persons, when they find themselves deceived, pass from extravagant praise to extravagant censure. "The Christian church is extolled," he says; "Christians only are great men; they all love another; they do whatever they can for one another. Whoever hears such language and does not know that the evil mixed with them is passed over in silence, is attracted by the panegyric; he finds the bad mixed with the good, of whom nothing had been said before; false Christians give him offence, and on that account he avoids even those who are genuine. Now he turns round, full of hatred and calumny, to find fault with Christians. What

people are these Christians? Are they not the same who fill the theatres on the days of public spectacles, and the churches on the feast-days?"

That separation of the third kind which led men, when they had joined this or the other honoured individual, to seek a pure and holy society in opposition to a corrupt church, that tendency which we may designate the separatist, easily led to false confidence in persons and in human rectitude. Such a tendency Augustin found among the Donatists of his time, with whom Donatus was everything, and of them he says: "When they hear that a heathen speaks evil of Christ, they bear it more patiently than when they hear their Donatus evil spoken of." And against this tendency he remarks admirably: "Let no one wish to place his hopes in a man. Man is only something as long as he depends on God. Let him withdraw from Him, and he is nothing. Receive counsel through man only in such a way that thou lookest to Him who enlightens man. For thou mayest come to Him who speaks to thee through man; for he lets not that man come to him while he rejects thee. And to him who has so come to God that God dwells in him, all persons are displeasing who do not place their hope in God. Whoever wishes to form a party amongst men, he is not one of those mountains which the Most High enlightens; but what is he? he is dark in himself, not light in the Lord."

Against those who were neglectful of their calling to labour for the salvation of others, Chrysostom says: "That every one should be active, not only for his own salvation, but also for that of the multitude, is proved by Christ's words when he calls Christians salt, and leaven, and light; for the light shines not for itself, but for those that sit in darkness, and thou art a light not to enjoy the light for thyself alone, but to bring back the wanderers. What is the use of the light if it does not enlighten those that sit in darkness? What is the use of a Christian if he wins no one, brings back no one to virtue? Also the salt does not keep itself alone, but it keeps bodies that are in danger of putrefaction, and preserves them from dissolution. Do thou also the same; since God has made spiritual salt out of thee, keep the members that are likely to putrefy; rescue them from it, unite them to the sound body of the church. On this account the

Lord has also called thee leaven; for the leaven does not leaven itself, but the rest of the mass. A little quantity leavens a large mass. So it is with you; if you are only few in number, yet you may be many and powerful by faith and divine zeal. Now as the leaven, though small in quantity, is not too weak, but penetrates by its indwelling warmth and power, so also you can arouse many more, if you will, to the same zeal." Thus Chrysostom exhorts them to home-missionary efforts.

That Providence brings men to vital Christianity by a variety of methods is shown particularly in the history of the mental formation of those men who were employed by the Lord as instruments for the advancement of Christian knowledge and of the Christian life. We notice that early Christian education, particularly by pious mothers, has had great influence in most cases, which was aided by many peculiar disturbances in their inward and outward life, by which the long-oppressed seed of religion was called forth to full activity. Thus Gregory Nazianzen, whose mother was the pious Nonna already mentioned. She hastened with her firstborn, as soon as she could, to the church, dedicated him to God, that his life might be of special service to religion, and placed as a sign of dedication, as was often done in such cases, a copy of the Gospels in the child's hand. The recollection of this first consecration always made a great impression on Gregory's mind; he compared himself to Samuel, whom Hannah dedicated so early to God. When a youth, he was nearly shipwrecked in a storm, and he was pained at the thought that he was likely to die unbaptized. He prayed with ardent tears that God would preserve his life for his service. And when he saw that his prayer was heard, he regarded it as a second dedication, a fresh obligation to devote his whole life to God. The son, who never reflected on his mother without a feeling of the deepest gratitude, especially on account of the blessing received from her for his higher life, gives the following description of her: "That she never visited the theatre; that though full of inward feeling and concern for the sufferings of others, yet no sudden emotion of sorrow could overcome her soul so that she could not first of all thank God for what had happened to her; that whatever mournful event might have happened, she never wore mourning on a feast-day, for in her

the human was always overpowered by the divine; the religious feelings conquered all others; the concerns of salvation relating to mankind moved her heart more deeply than anything personal. She appeared in church with reverential devotion. This feeling of reverence was impressed on her outward appearance, so that she never ventured to expectorate in the church nor to turn her back to the altar;" which as a mere outward thing might be despised, but an outward manifestation of internal tender piety deserves respect, as at all times the disposition is of main importance, in whatever forms, in themselves indifferent, it may be expressed; and this disposition Nonna preserved in her last trial, for "she died while praying in the church."

The effects of this Christian training of her children by the pious Nonna were seen not only in her firstborn, but in her second son, Cæsarius. His course of life was very different indeed from Gregory's; he was more deeply involved in the distractions of worldly life, and held the office of imperial physician in the court of Constantinople. He remained at court when the Emperor Julian came to the throne. This prince, who was so hostile to Christianity, and anxious to withdraw all men of eminent talent from the church, and to enlist them in the service of heathenism, employed all the arts of persuasion and promises upon Cæsarius. His family were rendered very anxious on his account. His brother Gregory wrote to him, and said, "How can thy father, the bishop, exhort others not to be carried away by the times? how can he punish offenders in any other quarter when in his own house he has no ground for joy?" They endeavoured to conceal the state of things from his mother, for they knew that her pious heart would be wounded most acutely if her son yielded to the emperor's solicitations. But Cæsarius held the gospel to be a pearl for which everything should be parted with, and he quitted the court rather than injure the cause of God. When he returned to a court life, after this emperor's death, a remarkable occurrence gave fresh excitement to his piety. During an earthquake which desolated the town of Nicæa in Bithynia, where he held an honourable office, he was buried under the falling ruins of his own house. But he was taken out alive and unhurt. His friend, Basil, of Cæsarea, then wrote to him, and suggested how it behoved a Christian

to regard such events. "It now remains for us to show that we are not ungrateful nor unworthy of so great a mercy, but, according to our ability, to make known God's wonders, and to thank him not only with words, but also to be thankful in fact, as I am convinced that you are disposed to be after the wonders you have witnessed. Although it is enjoined on all of us to devote ourselves to God as those that are alive from the dead, yet how much more is this incumbent on those who have been raised from the gates of death. This, according to my conviction, would be attained most certainly if we always wished to have the same mind which we had in the time of danger; for then surely the thought of the nothingness of life laid hold of us, and we felt that nothing in human things was trustworthy and stable, since all things were so instantaneously changed. Then probably we repented of our former lives, and we vowed to serve God afresh if he delivered us, and to watch over ourselves most strictly. Hence we are bound to discharge an urgent debt." Such an impression was really made by this wonderful deliverance on the mind of Cæsarius. Baptism was for him, as for so many others at that time, the starting-point of a new section of his life, which was now filled with deeper earnestness. Yet he was able to exemplify his new resolutions only for a short time, for he was called away to eternal life. "I leave all I have to the poor," were his last words.

Basil of Cæsarea received his first training in a lonely spot of Pontus from his pious grandmother, Emmelia, who scattered in his young mind the seeds of Christianity, which she had received from Gregory Thaumaturgus, the venerable bishop of Neo-Cæsarea. When he returned from his literary studies at Athens to his native place Cæsarea, and by the splendour shed around him by his talents might have been seduced from serious thoughts, the effect of his pious grandmother's instructions was strengthened by the influence of his sister Macrina, who had been early trained to read the Sacred Scriptures by that grandmother, and in whom the first impressions of childhood had been perpetuated in a quiet, retired life. Basil entered on a new section of his life at his baptism; he prepared himself for the clerical office in retirement, or in intercourse with like-minded persons, and in prayer, combined with the study of the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers. He says himself of

this new direction of his life: "When I—who had dissipated much time in vain things, and had spent almost my whole youth in learning that wisdom which is foolishness with God—when I, awaking, as it were, out of a deep sleep beheld the wonderful light of the truths of the gospel, *then* I perceived the uselessness of the wisdom of the princes of this world, which comes to nought; *then* I lamented my hitherto pitiable life; I sought help; I sought to appropriate divine truth, and strove before all things to amend my mental state, which had been injured for a long time by associating with the bad."

Theodoret's pious mother exerted a similar influence in his education. She was three-and-twenty years old, brought up in all the splendour of the metropolis of the Roman empire in the East, Antioch, when a weakness of the eyes was the occasion of bringing her to serious reflection. She sought out Peter, a venerable monk of Antioch, and besought him to cure her by his prayers. He began to reprove her for the splendid attire in which she appeared before him. "Did she mean to insult the formative skill of the Creator by attempting to deck and beautify his workmanship by artificial ornament?" He then said, in answer to her request, "I am a mortal like yourself, and a man full of sin; I can do no miracle; nor does God do such things for my sake." Upon urging her suit with tears, he said, "God alone can heal, and he hears the prayers of believers; he will therefore now grant this favour not to me, but to yourself, if he sees your faith. If you have such a firm faith, then receive the cure from God." He drew his hand across her eyes, and made the sign of the cross upon them; she was cured, certainly not by the magical power of that manipulation which the monk himself denied, but by the power of her faith, which he had been the means of exciting. And this cure of a bodily malady laid the foundation of a cure for the malady of her soul. Having been long childless, though resigned herself to the will of God, her husband could not rest, but requested the prayers of all the monks on her behalf. One of them, Macedonius, told her that if she would only pray, she would have a son; but she must dedicate him to that God from whom she received him. When she answered that she sought nothing on earth but her soul's welfare, he replied: "The bountiful God will also give

you a son; for to those who pray to him in sincerity, he is wont to give double what they ask of him." When she found herself in danger of a bad confinement, the monk came again to her, and said, "Take courage. He who has bestowed this gift on you will not take it from you, if you do not break your vow, but persevere in devoting to his service what he has given you." The pious mother, who told this to her son in his boyhood, took him every week to these venerable men, that he might receive their blessing, and derive sacred impressions from their appearance and their words. Peter sought to make the child friendly with him, by taking him on his knee, and giving him bread and grapes. Macedonius often said to him, "My son, your birth has cost much toil. Many nights I have kept awake to pray God that he would give you to your parents. Lead, therefore, a life worthy of such efforts. From your birth you have been dedicated to God [even by his name, *Theodoret, i.e. God-given;* his parents wished to remind him of this all his life]. But what is devoted to God is to be honoured by all; it must not be touched by the vulgar. Therefore you must not admit of any evil emotions in your soul, but only do, say, and think that by which God, the lawgiver of holiness, will be glorified." By such powerful admonitions that inward piety was cherished in Theodoret which distinguished him throughout his life in conflict with the corruptions of the times.

As Chrysostom was first led to vital Christianity by his pious mother, the young widow Anthusa, who devoted herself entirely to his education, so Augustin, as we have already remarked, heard and read the word of God through the care of Monica, who was a model of a Christian wife and mother. She bore with Christian patience and gentleness the rough, passionate temper of her husband. She had the warmest affection for him; and her earnest endeavour to accomplish the most cherished wish of her heart, to win him to the Lord, more by her life than by her words, was at last accomplished. After her husband's death, she laboured diligently with her own hand to acquire a competency to enable her son Augustin to pursue his studies at Carthage. But nothing gave her greater sorrow than the alteration which she perceived in her son after his return; for no one could pain her more than by wishing to take away that Christ whom she bore in her

heart, as her son did, to whom this Christ was too much "according to the flesh," and who on the contrary spoke only of a spiritual Christ whom her childlike faith could not comprehend. And nothing could pain her more than to see him, whom of all other beings she most loved, destitute of that which was dearest to her, on which her hopes for eternity were grounded as well as her happiness in this world. She often prayed with many tears to God, and requested wise and pious men to take him under their care. One bishop to whom she applied gave her, from his own experience (for he belonged himself early in life to the sect of the Manicheans), the wise advice, that she should quietly let her son go on, for he now exulted in his first youthful confidence and had overcome many simple Christians by his sophisms; it would now be in vain to dispute with him, but when he had cooled down, he would himself see what was untenable in that doctrine. As she could not desist urging him, he said at last, half vexed, "Take courage! the son for whom you have shed so many tears cannot be lost!"—words which entered her heart like consolation from heaven.

Thinking day and night about her son, she was very much encouraged by a dream. She thought that she was standing by a wooden balustrade, and a young man in a shining form appeared and bade her be of good courage; and that if she looked round she would see her son standing by her side. When filled with joy, she told this dream to Augustin; he replied, "It means that you will become a Manichean." "No," said she quickly, in her simplicity, "then it would have been said, 'where he stands you will stand.'" She hastened after her son to Milan, and how was she rejoiced with the alteration that had taken place in him; she recognised in the workings of his mind the entrance of a new life, and how great at last was her joy when this new life had made a path for itself; when all her hopes were surpassed; when her son, after the victory of faith with inward peace, which had succeeded to those powerful perturbations, came to her in the glow of his first love; how she thanked God, who can do exceeding abundantly above all the expectations and conceptions of men. Augustin himself says to her at this time: "To your prayers I believe I owe that God has given me this disposition—to esteem nothing more highly than

the investigation of truth, to wish for, to think, to love nothing else." She took a lively interest in the conversations on divine things which Augustin held with his friends, in a lonely country place, whither he had retired, after that epoch of his inner life, in order to prepare for baptism. In her pious simplicity she often expressed correct sentiments in an extraordinary manner. When, for example, the question was proposed, "Is not every one happy who has what he wishes?" she answered, "If he wishes and has the good, he is happy; but if he wishes for the evil, he is not happy, even when he has it." When the conversation was brought to this conclusion, that happiness can only be found in communion with God, she expressed her assent in the words of a hymn, of which she had been reminded by the turn the conversation had taken and said, "That is certainly the happy life which is perfect life, and we must hasten to this life with firm faith, with joyful hope, and ardent love." Monica had now attained the object of all her earthly wishes. She now hastened, since as she supposed she had nothing more to do on earth, to the perfection of that happy life. She had long before felt anxious to die in her native country, in order that she might be buried in the same grave as her husband. But now she was resigned on this point to the will of God. The Lord, she said, who will awaken us, can collect our bones everywhere. With this peaceful and joyful resignation she soon departed to everlasting life, after she had seen the fulfilment of her last and most ardent wish.

Chrysostom refers to the influence thus excited by Christian females, as in the examples we have adduced, in one of his homilies, when he says, "Wives in true practical Christian wisdom have the advantage over their husbands, because for the most part they sit quietly at home. But, thou sayest, there is much that is unquiet in the house. Yes, because thou wilt have it so, and encumberest thyself with a multitude of cares. The husband, who busies himself in the market or in the courts of justice, is tossed hither and thither by the unrest of the world. The wife remains at home, as in a school of wisdom, collects her thoughts, and can occupy herself with prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. Like those persons who have withdrawn into solitude, she is disturbed by no one; she can enjoy perpetual quiet. And when

her husband comes home, burdened with a multiplicity of cares, she can calm his temper, restore harmony to his soul, prune off strange and distracting thoughts, and thus enable him to leave the house purified from the evil that he brought from the market, and accompanied by the good that he has learned at home. For nothing is more influential than a pious and intelligent wife to form her husband, and to influence him as she will. I could tell of many a hard and inflexible nature which has been thus softened."

Of his conversion Augustin thus speaks at Carthage, where he once lived as a youth in the pleasures of the world: "Here I led an evil life, which I confess; and in proportion as I rejoice in the grace of God, so do I mourn over my former sins. Shall I say I mourn? I should mourn if I were still the same. But what shall I say? that I rejoice? and that I cannot say, for alas! oh, that I had never been such. Yet what I was it is past, in the name of Christ." If we recognise in an Augustin and a Chrysostom the same Christian spirit which united men of the most different characters, and under the most different relations, to labour for one common object, yet we may observe the difference in their Christian culture; as Chrysostom gradually attained to vital Christianity in a retired monastic life, without undergoing such a violent mental conflict, we find in him at all times a mild warmth, a spirit of quiet love and moderation; in Augustin, on the other hand, whose conversion commenced with a powerful commotion in his inner life, and proceeded from one point, the central point of Christianity, the knowledge of sin, grace, and redemption—the whole scheme of faith and morals appears standing in vital relation to this central point, and formed in harmony with it, as we find in no other person.

CHAPTER III.

THE MONASTIC SYSTEM, AND ITS RELATION TO THE GENERAL CHRISTIAN LIFE.

We have seen that, in the first ages, the opposition to heathen corruption caused Christianity to appear preeminently as a world-conflicting power, which gave rise to the onesided ascetic tendency; and this tendency, as we have already remarked, was called forth in the age of which we are now speaking by the opposition to a secularized Christianity, to a heathen life continued under the semblance of Christianity. Such an opposition tended especially to promote the spread of monkery, in which the free ascetic character acquired a more fixed and regulated form.

Hence numerous monastic societies were formed in the vicinity of a great corrupt city such as Antioch; and they often formed a salutary counteractive to the corruption of such places. Many individuals who felt dissatisfied and vacant amidst all the splendour of earthly glory, and all earthly pleasures, visited the cells of the monks from curiosity, or to obtain consolation or advice under some emergency. Here they saw how to men who possessed nothing of the splendour or joys of the world, and who had limited their natural wants in every possible way, the repose, dignity, and serenity of a higher life were revealed, of which they themselves had previously no conception. They met here many a one who had withdrawn from splendid places of honour, to find among the poor monks what he had vainly sought for in the pomps of the world. Hence it might happen that a person, struck by the spectacle before him, would be seized with a sense of the nothingness of earthly glory, renounce everything, and associate himself with the monks. By intercourse with God in prayer, and by the devout study of the Scriptures, many became really sanctified —such persons as those who read the Scriptures (as the monk Marcus expresses it)—"so that full of humility they applied everything which they read to themselves, and judged not others, but themselves, according to it." But when they learned to know themselves in the light of the divine word,

according to their inmost being, a deeper knowledge of human nature was disclosed to them than to those who without self-inspection had an opportunity of knowing many men as to their outward appearance. The monk who was not disposed to deceive himself by the semblance of good works strove with warmer longing after true holiness and purity of the inner man, and he could thus attain to so much deeper knowledge of the nature of sin and of the true righteousness proceeding from Christ, as in later times the inner experiences of Luther's monastic life became the fountain of the whole Reformation.

Such experiences also were those of the monk Marcus in the fourth century. "Every good," he says, "is given by God: Christ is all to believers;" and, "Seek not for perfection in human virtues, for in them nothing perfect is to be found. The perfection of the law of freedom is hidden in the cross of Christ. The kingdom of heaven is not the reward of works, but prepared as the gracious gift of the Lord for his faithful servants. Some think they have a sound faith, and yet do not fulfil the divine commands; others endeavour to fulfil them, but expect the kingdom of heaven as a reward due to them; both these classes miss the right way to the kingdom of heaven. The Lord owes no reward to his servants; but if they do not serve him in the right way, they do not obtain freedom. If Christ died for us, and we live not to ourselves but to Him who died for us, and rose again, then are we bound to serve him, even to death. How can we then regard adoption into God's family as a reward which we can claim? Christ is our Lord according to his divine nature, and according to the humanity assumed by him, since he created us out of nothing; and when we were dead through sin, he redeemed us by his own blood, and has given grace to those who believe in him. All of us who have been worthy of the bath of regeneration perform good works, not to merit reward, but in order to preserve the purity imparted to us."

Thus Marcus always insists on the necessary connection between the whole work of Christ for and in men, and their progressive sanctification, and points out that the latter is founded on the former; he always combats the onesidedness by which the one is separated from the other, as when he says, "We must not by our fault get again entangled in the

yoke of bondage, but preserve our freedom by keeping the commandments; and in proportion to our doing that, we shall attain a knowledge of all truth. And we must know for certain that in proportion as we neglect these commands, we are brought under the influence of sin. Let us not believe the speculations of men, but the Holy Scriptures; that Christ died for our sins; that we are buried with him by baptism; and that he who is dead is justified from sin: and that sin will not be able to reign over us, if we obey his commands. But if we do not observe them, we are unbelievers, and are under the dominion of sin. For it does not merely belong to the gospel that we should be baptized into Christ, but likewise that we should obey his commands. If we say that by our works sin will be destroyed, then Christ has died in vain, and all that is affirmed of his work is false; and if baptism be not something complete by itself, but they think by their conflicts to attain completeness, then in such persons the law of freedom is made void, the whole essence of the new covenant is destroyed, and they make Christ unrighteous if he prescribed to the baptized works of freedom, and yet against their will they are the servants of sin, and the grace of God is no more grace, but the reward of our conflict. If we are justified by works, there is no more grace; but if it is by grace, then work is no more work (nothing outward subsisting for itself), but it is the command of our liberator,* the work of freedom and of faith. Have you not heard that the commands of Christ given after baptism are a law of freedom? as the Holy Scripture saith: 'So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty,' (James ii. 12) [Marcus correctly recognizes in these words the agreement of James and Paul]; and 2 Peter i. 9: 'He that lacketh these things hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.'" From what has been said, he acknowledges purification by baptism, which indeed takes place in a hidden manner, but shows its reality by the observance of the commandments. Those who as believers have received power to fulfil the commands, the Lord exhorts to fight, not as if they could thereby atone for sin, but that they may not return again to that which

* *Εἰ γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων, οὐκ ἔτι χάριτι (ἀναρεῖται ἁμαρτια)· εἰ δὲ χάριτι, τὸ ἔργον οὐκ ἔστιν ἔργον, ἀλλ' ἐντολὴ του ἐλευθερώσαντος, καὶ ἔργον ἐλευθερίας καὶ πιστεως.*—Marcus, *de Baptism.* (Galland. viii. p. 37.)

they have left behind. And the observance of these commands does not itself expel sin, for this is only effected through the cross, but it guards the boundaries of the freedom that is vouchsafed us. As to those persons who quote Rom. vii. 14, and following verses, against this doctrine of the internal freedom of Christians, Marcus justly replies, that the apostle here speaks in the person of an unbelieving Jew, in order to show the Jews that men without the grace of Christ cannot be freed from sin; and he appeals to ver. 25 as the exclamation of a redeemed person. He then says: "The heavenly lawgiver, Christ, has himself inscribed the spiritual law by his Spirit in the hearts of believers. Learn from the Apostle Paul that by baptism thou hast put on Christ; thou hast received power and weapons to overcome evil thoughts. We must not believe that by our conflict we can blot out Adam's sin, nor the sins committed by ourselves after baptism; for that can be effected only through Christ. For he himself works in us to will and to do." And on the heavenly life of believers he says: "We know that the heavenly Jerusalem, and the blessings which the righteous shall receive at the resurrection, are above; but the pledge and the first-fruits are already in the hearts of firm believers, as those who are already spiritually-minded; so that we, being confident of future things, despise the present, and love God even to death. On this account the apostle, in Heb. xii. 22, says, not 'ye *will* come,' but 'ye *are* come to the city of the living God.'"

We find similar attestations in favour of true inward Christianity in the monk Nilus: "'Behold, the eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.' (Psa. xxxiii. 18.) Whoever does not think that he can be justified by works, places the hope of his salvation in God's mercy alone. For when he hears that God will reward every one according to his works, and thinks of his own sinful works, he is filled with fear. But that he may not be swallowed up by anguish, he looks to the grace of God." The same writer says also, in another epistle: "Thou writest that a heathen who acknowledges that he is a sinner, has said to thee: 'If thou art a Christian, thou hast no pre-eminence before me, for thou also art a sinner.' Propound to him, therefore, this parable: A householder has two dogs, the one that rages, and would tear his master in pieces, he

orders him to be killed; the other that loves his master, and, full of attachment, always follows in his steps, he keeps, cherishes, and supports." Nilus meant by this that what distinguishes one of these sinners from the other is love to God, from whom he had been estranged by sin; that love which longs for freedom from all that is ungodlike, which accepts the forgiveness of sins, and resigns itself to the Redeemer in order to be progressively sanctified and purified by him. In love itself is given, notwithstanding all the impurity that still cleaves to man, the principle from which all progressive purity must proceed. That true love is here intended which shows itself in action. Nilus was very far from approving a slavish disposition which seeks to gain over by flattery the Being whose vengeance is feared, which ought not to be called love, but rather the hypocrisy of fear. That such was the meaning of his expressions appears from what he wrote to a person who excused his sins, by saying that no man could boast of having a holy heart: "But the worst thing is that you do not come to the Lord Christ, who can change your heart into a holy one, and that you do not ask him to bestow this gift upon you; for Christ can purify your heart by the Holy Spirit. Who was more sinful than that publican? but because he said, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' he went down from the temple justified rather than the pharisee. Yet it was not that prayer that purified him, but the *disposition* with which he uttered it; and above all the love of God to man, who wills not that we should perish, but calls us to repentance."

Such were the views of the most enlightened monks. But there were many others who imagined that they had overcome sin by chastising their bodies; they trusted so much the more to the righteousness of their works, because the simple, uniform, and quiet life of monkery, which they made no use of for the purpose of self-examination, subjected them to no trials by which they might have been brought to correct self-knowledge. Jerome, who might have known this from his own experience, and yet, alas! too often forgot that experience! thus writes to a friend who was a monk: "In solitude sometimes pride creeps in, and when a person has fasted a little and seen no one, he thinks himself to be some great one; he forgets whence he came and whither he is

going." The outward apparent abjuration of the world becomes a hindrance to true inward self-examination, and fosters spiritual pride—that pride which is so much more dangerous for the inner life in proportion as the objects to which it refers are of a higher and more refined kind, and that is made use of to nourish pride which is designed to cast down all high thoughts. That secret invisible enemy who knows how to hide in all lurking-places and turnings, and to change himself as a Proteus into all shapes, whom man takes about with him everywhere, if he has not conquered him by the power of the cross, follows him from the bustle of the great world into the quiet of cloisters and deserts. Jerome did not without reason warn a distinguished Roman female: "Let it not produce pride in you that you have despised the pride of the world; take care lest, since you have ceased to wish to attract notice in garments full of gold, you seek it in sordid attire.' "

Thus, from monkery proceeded that show of humility of which Paul speaks in the Epistle to the Colossians, which in that age of shams assumed a variety of forms beyond the bounds of monkery. Isidorus, abbot of Pelusium, in the first half of the fifth century, raised a warning voice against this delusion: "Be humble," said he, "in disposition, and not in words, that your words may not be contradicted by your actions." And Chrysostom* says against this feigned humility: "If we speak evil of ourselves a thousand times, and yet are affronted when another says anything of the kind, this is not humility; this is not confession of sin, but only pretence and vanity. What! a pretence when a man calls himself a sinner? Yes; we assume the appearance of

* Ἐὰν δὲ αὐτοὶ μὲν λέγωμεν μυρία ἑαυτοὺς κακά, παρ' ἑτέρων δὲ ἀκουοντες ὑυσχεραίνωμεν, οὐκέτι τουτο ταπεινοφροσύνη ἐστὶν, οὐδὲ ἐξομολόγησις, ἀλλ' ἐπίδειξις καὶ κενοδοξία. Ἐπίδειξίς ἐστι, φησιν, ἑαυτὸν ἁμαρτωλον καλεῖν; Ναί. Ταπεινοφροσύνης γὰρ λαμβάνομεν δόξαν, θαυμαζόμεθα, ἐγκωμιαζόμεθα. Ἐὰν δὲ τοὐναντιον εἴπωμεν ἑαυτοὺς, καταφρονοὐμεθα. Ὥστε καὶ τοὐτο δόξης ἕνεκεν ποιοὐμεν. Τί δὲ ἐστι ταπεινοφροσύνη; Τὸ ἑτέρου ὀνειδίζοντος, το ἐπίγινώσκειν τὸ ἁμαρτημα, τὸ φέρειν τας κακηγορίας, καὶ οὐδὲ τουτο ταπεινοφροσύνης ἂν εἴη, ἀλλ' εὐγνωμοσύνης. Νὖν δὲ ἑαυτοὺς μὲν λέγομεν ἁμαρτωλοὺς, ἀναξίους, μυρία ὅσω· αν δε ἕτερός τις ημιν ἐν τούτων προσενέγκῃ, χαλεπαίνομεν, ἀγριαινόμεθα. Ὁρᾷς ὅτι οὐκ ἐστιν εξομολογησις, οὐδὲ εὐγνωμοσυνη;—Chrysost. *in Ep. ad Hebr.* xxvii. § 5.

humility that we may be admired and praised. If we spoke of ourselves in a contrary manner, we should be despised. Therefore we do this for the sake of reputation. But what is humility? To endure when another reviles us—to be sensible of our faults—to bear reproach—is not humility, but simple fairness. Now, we call ourselves sinners, unworthy beings, and ten thousand such things; but if any one else should apply any of these epithets to us, we are full of wrath, and turn savage. Dost thou not see that this is not confession nor ingenuousness?" The same Father says, in another homily: "Understand and tremble; never be proud of thy humility! Perhaps you may smile at this expression, as if any one could be proud of his humility. But do not be surprised; it serves for self-exaltation when it is not genuine. How and in what manner? When it is practised not for the sake of pleasing God, but for the sake of being praised, and of indulging pride; for this is something devilish. How many out of vanity show the appearance of vanity, and thus are proud of their humility. For example, a brother or a servant comes; thou hast thyself taken care of him; thou hast washed his feet: at once pride comes in; thou sayest, 'I have done what no one else has done; there I have shown my humility.' How should a person keep himself humble? Let him think of Christ's command: 'When ye shall have done all, say, we are unprofitable servants.' (Luke xvii. 10.) Let him think of that great teacher who said: 'I count not myself to have apprehended.' Only he who does not think, whatever he may do, that he does some great thing, can be truly humble, and who always bears in mind that he has not yet attained."

Still humility and love were not always wanting to the strict asceticism of monkery, without which everything else is worthless. Not always did a person who chose for himself a life of stricter abstinence place the essence of Christianity in it. Of this we have a beautiful example. Marcian, a venerated Syrian monk, was visited by another, named Avitus. After conversation and prayer, Marcian caused a meal to be prepared, not altogether according to his customary spare diet, and invited Avitus to set at table with him. He declined, saying that he never was wont to eat anything before evening, and often fasted two or three days. Marcian replied, "Depart from thy custom to-day for my sake; I am too

weak to wait till evening." But when he could not thus persuade Avitus, he said, sighing: "Alas! I am very sorry that thou hast taken so much trouble to see a strict and wise man, and now thou seest instead a glutton." These words did not fail to make an impression on Avitus, and he said, with shame: "I would rather eat flesh than hear thee speak thus." Then Marcian said: "I have been accustomed to the same manner of life as thyself, my dear brother; but I know that *love* is a thing of greater value than *fasting;* for the former is a work commanded by God, the latter we have chosen ourselves. But we ought to think far more highly of the divine laws than of self-imposed exercises."

Thus it appears that as, on the one hand, there proceeded from monkery a deep Christian self-knowledge, so on the other there was much deceptive self-righteousness and merit of works. As the monastic life was promoted by the erroneous notion that there was a higher stand-point of Christian life than that of general practical Christianity, a morality of the perfect; so the monastic system, in return, strengthened this error: and it was an error of very dangerous consequences. The distinction here made of a two-fold Christianity was very acceptable to many who were contented with only a profession of religion; since it transferred all the earnestness of the higher Christian life to men who lived in retirement from the world, and they could excuse themselves from all the claims of practical piety, by alleging that these did not relate to people living in the world, but were quite out of their sphere.

Against such a tendency, Chrysostom, after describing the piety of the monks who lived in the mountains not far from the great city of Antioch, as an example worthy of imitation by his flock, says: "We wish that we men were ashamed at the sight of their resolution, and that we ceased to cleave to the earthly, to that which is shadows, dreams, and vapour. Let us strive after unchangeable and imperishable goods, after the life that never grows old. Even living in the midst of the city, we can imitate the wisdom of the monks. And when a man is married and is busied with family cares, he can pray and repent; for those who were the first converts of the apostles dwelt in cities, and there were among them those who manifested a piety such as we find in those who dwell on the mountain-tops;

and were people in business, as Priscilla and Aquila. The prophets had wives and families, as Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the great Moses, and this did not hinder them in their efforts after virtue. Thus let us imitate them, and continually thank and praise God. Let us strive after true health of the soul and all Christian virtues, and let us carry into the city the Christian life of the desert." In the third book of his work against the enemies of monasticism, he also says: "Some say, indeed, it is not the same thing when a man in the world sins, and one who has devoted himself to the service of God; for both do not fall from the same height, and hence do not receive the same injury. But thou deceivest thyself, if thou thinkest that one thing is required of a man in the world and another of a monk. The whole difference consists only in being married or a celibate. In all other respects they have to render the same account." He appeals to the fact that the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount are addressed to all Christians, and that Christ makes there no distinction between monks and people in the world; that Paul, writing to persons who had wives and children, required from them the same strictness of the Christian life which could be required from the monks, since he reduces everything to unselfish love. (1 Cor. xiii.) He requires that we should consider ourselves as dead and buried in reference to sin. (Rom. vi. 7.) "How is it that he commands us to imitate, not merely the monks nor the disciples, but Christ himself, and threatens with the severest punishment those who neglect to do this. How sayest thou, then, that they stand on a greater elevation? All men should rise to the same height, and what ruins the whole world is just this—the imagining that greater strictness of Christian conduct is required in a monk, but that other persons may lead careless lives." And in a homily he says: "A secular man is distinguished from a monk only by marriage; in all other respects he ought to act like a monk. And the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount were not pronounced merely for monks, otherwise the whole world would be lost, and we should accuse God of cruelty. If the beatitudes were intended only for the monks, and secular men cannot fulfil their conditions, but God has sanctioned marriage, then he has involved all men in misery. For if men cannot in married life maintain such a disposition

as is required of monks, then all is lost, and virtue is indeed confined to a very narrow path. How, then, can marriage be an honourable condition, if it is such a hindrance to our spiritual progress? What must we say then? It is possible, yes, very possible, even in wedlock to practise virtue, if we are only willing—if those who have wives be as those that had none (1 Cor. vii. 29); (that is, if they are ready to forego everything for the sake of the kingdom of God;) if we do not place our chief joy in earthly possessions; if they who use this world are as if they used it not (their hearts are not attached to it, they are ready to resign all for the sake of higher interests). But if to many marriage should prove a hindrance, they may know that it is not marriage that is the hindrance, but the perverse will that makes a bad use of marriage."

Thus the monastic life led to an idle self-contemplation, which for man, who ought always to turn from himself to something higher than himself, will be always very dangerous: it led to an uniform see-saw movement in a confined circle of feelings and views. And the consequences were, either the fanatic self-idolatry of a perverted mysticism, such as was to be found, for example, in the Messalians or Euchites, who proceeded from the Syrian cloisters in the fourth century, or a torturing and gloomy anxiousness, which was opposed to the spirit of adoption and to that love which casteth out fear. The more the monks occupied themselves with their temptations, instead of looking from themselves to the Lord, so much the more those temptations increased, many of which they could easily have overcome, if they had been willing to forget themselves in an activity of a calling that would have laid under requisition all the powers of their nature; on which account they felt the need of occupying, by manual labour—such as basket-making, and other handicrafts—the senses and lower powers of their nature, which if they had not been employed about their own proper business, and tamed by labour, threatened to mingle with and disturb the higher faculties;—for this reason Jerome applied himself late in life to the study of the Hebrew, with the sweat of his brow. He describes his internal conflicts, when he says: "I recollect that I often continued crying day and night, and ceased not to beat my breast, until by the voice of the

Lord rest returned to me. I even dreaded my cell, as if it were privy to my thoughts. Wherever I saw hollows in the valleys or rough places on the mountains, there were my praying stations, and as the Lord himself is a witness, I believed often, after many tears, after my looks had long been fixed on heaven, that I was transported among choirs of angels."

The monk Nilus writes in the following manner to another monks, who was sorely troubled by internal temptations: "Above all, we conquer by faith, singing, reading the Scriptures, humility, and especially by calling on the name of Jesus Christ, the God who loves mankind, and our Saviour. But evil spirits cannot overcome us, if we do not first all, by want of faith, depart from the fear of God, and neglect the commands of the Lord. But if souls harassed by sins can only collect themselves, and with mournful heart sigh to God, if they embrace with their prayers the invisible feet of the Lord, he will say to the angels, as Elisha said of the Shunammite (2 Kings iv. 27): Let her alone and drive her not from me; for if she possesses no virtue, and cannot come with joy to me, yet since her heart is contrite, and since she prays to me incessantly with sorrow and tears, I receive her and rescue her. Let us not therefore, when we avoid the thoughts that trouble us, retire from one place to another, but rather let us remain where we are, and continue in prayer, as Moses said to the Israelites: 'Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you this day.' (Exod. xiv. 13.)"

There were among the monks great souls, who were in fact free from earthly bonds, had their conversation in heaven, and only entered into worldly relations in order to dispense blessings; like that Antony, who, when the Emperor Constantine wrote to him in his remote solitude, and his scholars congratulated him upon the honour, said to them: "Rejoice not that a sinful man like ourselves has written a letter to us, but rejoice that the holy Almighty God, our Creator, has thought us worthy to write the epistle of the gospel to us, from heaven itself to us his poor creatures!" But there were also among the monks a great many persons who still retained in their hearts the world, which they had outwardly forsaken, and too often showed their worldly dis-

position, to the great scandal of the church. As it has ever been, good was mixed with evil, and Augustin justly remarks of monasticism: "Even this order in the church has its true men and mere hypocrites. To whatever class you turn, be prepared to meet with hypocrites; for if you are not so prepared, you will find what you do not expect, and will be led to apostatism, or be filled with disquiet. Let no one deceive you. If you would not be deceived, and if you wish to love your brethren, be assured that in every class of persons in the church, there are those who *are* not what they *appear* to be."

As to the outward life of the monks, we must distinguish in this respect the Anchorites from the Cœnobites. The Anchorites by no means excluded themselves from exercising an agency over other men. As they were held in greater reverence, they were more sought for by men of all stations, to whom, from the treasures of their inner experience, they were able to impart instruction, counsel and comfort. A single word uttered from their lips was received as a voice from heaven, and often had more effect, when spoken at the right juncture, than many a long discourse from any other quarter. We must not estimate human agency in too mechanical a manner, especially when it relates to the inner life, and lays hold of the invisible. How often has a single word formed an epoch in a man's life! Even the hermits, who never issued from their cells or caves, and only gave answers from small openings in them, were consulted by governors and emperors. When no voice of truth ventured to penetrate to persons in authority and emperors, who had given themselves up to the fury of their passions, or to powerful bishops, who had lost all sense of their duty, nothing could reach such persons but the written or oral opinion of a member of the monastic order, whose lot forbade every suspicion of a self-interested motive. Often monks, who had been for a long time concealed in their deserts or on the mountains, suddenly made their appearance on the occasion of political catastrophes, in cities where for a long time they had never been seen, and through their powerful intercession effected the deliverance of many unfortunate persons.

As to the monastic unions in cloisters, they formed small

associations of a hundred or even a thousand persons, where no one was allowed to live idle, but each one, in his assigned place, was to be active for the general good in the spirit of love. The presidents of these unions were the spiritual guides, who, if they possessed Christian knowledge and wisdom, could do much for the benefit of each individual. In the cloisters, men of the most different classes—servants, the poor, and people of rank—were sometimes collected together, and became united in Christian fellowship. By the labour of these associations, many persons in distress were often relieved: here attention was paid to the Christian education of youth; here men who afterwards became able doctors of the church, were trained by close study and devout occupation with spiritual things. By many, the cloister-life was preferred to that of the Anchorites, as the latter, living alone, could for the most part care only for their own salvation; while, on the other hand, the members of the great monastic community could labour for the advantage of others, and be active in Christian love. Others rightly thought that greater ripeness and firmness of religious principle—a point attainable by few—were requisite in order to bear the Anchorite-life; they regarded the cloister-life as a sort of training for the former. "Men must first learn to obey," they said, "before they are capable of standing alone."

Self-denial and the humility of obedience were especially called into exercise in the monastic life, and constituted its leading virtues. But here also an erroneous view was introduced, arising from a perversion, which has been the source of many errors, that did much injury in these and succeeding times, and was often employed for palliating a servile spirit and spiritual despotism. True humility refers only to the relation of man to God; it is false when applied to the relation to the creature, even when considered as the organ of God. Man ought to humble himself, but not before any creature whatever, but before his God and Redeemer alone; he should be conscious of his nothingness in God's sight, in order to accomplish everything in him and through him. Whoever in his heart prostrates himself before God, for that very reason does not prostrate himself before any man; as the servant of the Lord alone who created him,

and redeemed him at such a price, he can become the servant of no man. In humility alone is founded the true freedom and elevation of a spirit related to God and redeemed by God. Isidorus, abbot of Pelusium, says: "True humility proceeds from a great and heavenly soul; pride, on the contrary, is the offspring of a little and vulgar mind." Chrysostom also says: "Where shall we find a nobler-minded man than Abraham? and yet he said, 'I am but dust and ashes' (Gen. xviii. 27): the truly noble-minded is also the man of genuine humility—I mean not the flatterer, nor him who does homage to men. For noble-mindedness is something very different from self-exaltation. And this makes it very evident—if one person holds and despises dung as dung, but another regards it as gold, which of the two is noble-minded? which the debased and narrow-minded? Is it not he who admires and values what is worthless? Apply this to the subject before us. He who calls himself dust and ashes, although he humbles himself, is truly noble-minded. But he who does not hold himself to be such, but to be some great one, he is the low-minded person who would make little things great. It was true greatness of soul which made Abraham say, 'I am but dust and ashes.' He possesses true greatness who does not require all those things on account of which others imagine themselves something, but despises those things, and has his greatness in himself. Let us therefore be humble, in order to attain true greatness; for whoever humbles himself shall be exalted." And in another homily he says:* "He who exalts himself is necessarily without real strength, for he possesses no sound exaltation, but sinks from his elevation, as suddenly as a soap-bubble bursts. If thou disbelievest this, give me a bold, arrogant man, and only let him once fall, and thou wilt see that he is more cowardly than any one, if he meets with even the slightest misfortune; for as a fire kindled of brushwood is soon in a blaze, and is as soon reduced to ashes, but hard wood is not so easily kindled and lasts longer; thus firm and solid souls are not easily kindled, nor does their flame easily go out.

* *Τὸν γὰρ ἀπονενοημένον ἀνάγκη πάντως καὶ ἀσθηνῆ τινα εἶναι. Οὐ γάρ ἐστι τὸ ὕψος ὑγιὲς, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ αἱ πομφολυγες εὐκόλως ῥήγνυνται, οὕτω καὶ οὗτοι ῥᾳδίως ἀπόλλυνται.*—Chrysost. *in Ep. ad Roman. Hom.* xx. § 4.

But in light sorts of wood, both happen in an instant. Since we know this, let us practise humility! For nothing is more powerful than this; it is stronger than rocks, harder than the diamond, and it produces greater security than walls and bulwarks; it overcomes all the machinations of Satan." Man must deny his self-will, but only in order to regain his will in a sanctified and refined state, which he subordinates only to that of God, that he may be the organ of the divine will, which, in virtue of its self-determination, is the only true freedom of a created spirit. But whoever denies his own will, in order to become the will-less organ of another man, he denies the image of God, in the dignity of his own free personality, turns himself from being a servant of God into a servant of man, and gives to the creature the honour due to God alone. Let not any one say that he sees in man, not man but only God, who makes use of man as an organ. In this way the Indian deification of the Brahmins may be justified. But every Christian must be a living organ of the Deity, a temple of the Holy Ghost, one taught of God, acknowledging only one Lord and Master. To such Christians, the Apostle Paul says: "Ye are bought with a price, be not the servants of men." Against that false humility, Paulinus of Nola says: "Take care; called to freedom as the servant of Christ, do not call thyself a servant of man, if thy fellow-servant; for it is rather the sin of flattery than the virtue of humility, to give to any man whatever the honour which we owe to our Lord alone, to our Teacher on earth, to our God. Also in humility, we must maintain the just medium, that we only humble ourselves before our Lord in the fear of God, whom to serve is true freedom. On the other hand, that humility is to be condemned which springs not from faith but from slavishness of spirit, the slave of falsehood, the enemy of truth, which knows nothing of true freedom. May we therefore humble our hearts before God, and raise our souls to the Lord, that we may fear none besides him, and love him above all."

Among the opponents of monachism, or of an excessive valuation of it, we must make a great difference. In conflicting with such a tendency of the Christian life, which proceeded from a perverse onesidedness, or from a mixture of a foreign with the Christian element, the main point is not

what is common, but what is different in the grounds of the opposition to it. To be able to oppose correctly a disturbed Christian tendency, we must first of all acknowledge what is really Christian in it, and know how to separate this from the disturbing element. Thus it makes an essential difference whether the monastic system is attacked from a pure and free Christian stand-point, or from the stand-point of a worldly spirit, which is incapable of perceiving and acknowledging what is Christian and elevated in it. To many, monachism was distasteful because it opposed worldly pleasures and a disposition that was directed entirely to earthly things. What they disliked in monasticism was not its limitation of Christian liberty, but its earnest spiritual disposition. Thus, fathers who wished their sons to pursue a splendid course in the world were very much chagrined if they took a serious direction under the influence of pious mothers. And when fathers wished to entangle their sons in worldly pleasures, and forcibly to suppress the religious spirit, it more easily took a decidedly ascetic direction. Augustin, in a passage in which he is speaking, according to Matt. x. 34, of the spiritual conflict which Christianity everywhere excited, says: "Truly, my brethren, we see by daily examples that, let a youth delight to serve God, he displeases his father; the father promises an earthly inheritance, the son prefers the heavenly. Let not the father deem himself insulted; only God is preferred to himself."

Other persons, while they honoured the earnest Christian life in monasticism, and regarded it as an instrument of Christian culture, spoke against the over-valuation of a mode of life not connected with practical efficiency in the church. Thus, Chrysostom laments that Christian virtue, which ought to have dwelt in cities, had fled into the deserts; that those who should have been the salt of the earth had withdrawn from the world, leaving it to its corruption. He remarks that Christ said: "Let your light shine before men, not on the mountains, not in the deserts." "I do not say this," he adds, "to cast a reflection on those who inhabit the mountains, but to accuse the inhabitants of the cities that they have banished virtue from them." "On this account," he says, "let us bring Christian virtue thence among ourselves, in order that cities may become what cities ought to be." And Augustin

says: "Many say we want rest, to be free from care—to withdraw from the bustle of the world—to place ourselves in a state of security. When thou seekest rest, thou seekest as it were a bed, on which thou canst repose without anxiety. There are men who wish not to sustain the business of the world, and yet do nothing in the church, like teachers labouring in the Lord's vineyard; but who, as if too weak for it, withdraw themselves, and as if conscious of their weakness, do not venture on any great enterprise, but pray to God on their bed of languishing." The same Augustin writes to a monk: "Do not esteem your repose of more importance than the necessities of the church; for how could ye yourselves have been brought forth by her if ye had had no kindly disposed persons to assist at your birth. We must make our way between the summit of pride and the abyss of indolence.* For some who too anxiously flee from the elevation of pride, take to other bad courses, and are lost. Others who seek to avoid such courses, lest they should sink into indolent effeminacy, are consumed, on the other hand, by pride. [The middle path between a restless and uncalled-for activity, in which man, under the appearance of zeal for a good cause, only serves his own self-will, and a love of rest that withstands the call of God, only self-pleasing and seeking enjoyment, while it shuns conflict and toil. Augustin justly remarks that he only can find the middle path between these two extremes who does everything for the honour of God, that works all in all, and who has God continually before his eyes.] In your love for rest recollect that there is no place here below in which that being who fears lest we should rise to God, cannot plot against us, and that we can have no perfect rest till all evil be taken away." Thus also Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome, who so highly esteemed the monastic system, and made use of monks as missionaries, says: "There are some who, being endowed with great gifts, while they are animated only with the love of contemplation, are afraid to contribute to the advantage of their neighbours by preaching, and love the repose of solitude. But if they are strictly judged in this respect, they are certainly so much the more blameable in proportion to the good they could do

* Inter apicem superbiæ et voraginem desidiæ iter nostrum temperare debemus.—August. *Ep.* 48, 2.

in the world. With what a disposition can such an one, who could effect great advantage for others, prefer his solitude to the advantage of others, when the Only-begotten of the great Father himself descended from the bosom of the Father into our world for the advantage of many?"

Other persons, while they attacked monachism more warmly from that point of view, found themselves engaged in conflict with their age; like Vigilantius, who appears indeed to have been too violent and immoderate in his opposition, and who asked: "If all Christian men shut themselves up in cloisters, and withdraw into deserts, who shall preach the gospel, and call sinners to repentance?" The well-known Roman monk, Jovinian, entered most deeply into this warfare. He appears to us as a prototype of Luther, inasmuch as we recognize in him that reaction, called forth and nourished by monachism, of a more spiritual, internal Christianity, in opposition to what was merely external in monachism—that reaction which stretches through the mysticism of the middle ages down to Luther. He opposed not monachism in itself, nor the whole system of outward asceticism in itself, but the unevangelical notion, as if man could thereby attain a higher stage of the Christian life, a special meritoriousness in God's sight; as if there was a perfection rising above the general standard of the Christian calling, which could only be found in withdrawing from the world. "There is," he said, "one and the same divine life springing from fellowship with the Redeemer, in which all genuine Christians share, and a higher stage cannot exist!" Since in his polemics he made the central point of the opposition between nature and grace proceed from the whole reference of the life to Christ, and sought to re-establish in their proper position the fundamental truths which the great Apostle of the Gentiles opposed to Jewish externality, he was in these respects Luther's forerunner.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BISHOPS AND FATHERS OF THE CHURCH.

THE many outward advantages which were now connected with the ecclesiastical offices excited many persons who had not reflected on the sanctity and importance of the clerical function to press into it uncalled; men, who, as Gregory Nazianzus said, intrude into the sanctuary with unwashed hands and unconsecrated souls, and convert this office into a means of gain. But in opposition to these crowds of worldly-minded ecclesiastics, earnest souls were so much more deeply penetrated by a feeling of the sanctity and responsibility of this office, and of their own weakness and unworthiness. Many were induced by this depressing consciousness to run away from the call to a spiritual office, when it was in their power; which, on the other hand, was blamed by others who had equally high conceptions of the sanctity and responsibility of such an office, but considered themselves bound trustfully to follow a divine call, even at the sacrifice of their own self-will. "He is not truly humble," says the Roman bishop, Gregory the Great, who acknowledges and yet rejects the call from above to undertake an office in the church." The latter class of persons indeed believed that they ought not to canvass for such an office, but that they ought to accept it if they were called to it without their seeking it. In that case they believed that they might have that confidence to which Basil of Cæsarea summoned a newly-elected bishop. "Lament not over a burden exceeding thy power. Wert thou thyself obliged to bear this burden, it would not merely be difficult, but intolerable. But it is the Lord who will bear it with thee; therefore cast thy burden on the Lord, and he will do it." Thus Augustin, when the eyes of all persons in his native country were directed towards him, avoided being present when any church assembled, in which a spiritual office was vacant, in order to prevent the choice from falling on himself. But when on some special occasion he came to the city of Thagasta in Numidia, and was present at a meeting of the church, being unanimously elected presbyter, he did not

venture to decline the call of God, but received it with fear and trembling, with visible alarm and affliction; so that those persons who judged of him according to their own disposition, or as compared with many others who concealed extreme pride under the garb of humility, might have supposed that he was mortified because he had not obtained a higher office, more corresponding to his abilities. It lay heavy on his soul that, so soon after he had arrived at rest and peace from the wanderings of his earlier life, he should be made the teacher and guide of others. When he requested the bishop of the church to grant him an interval, in which he wished to prepare himself by prayer and the study of the divine word for the sacred office, he wrote to him: "I am so deficient, that I can more easily reckon what I have than what is wanting to me. For I might indeed venture to say that I know and hold in confident faith what is requisite for our salvation. But how shall I apply this to the salvation of others, so as not to seek what may be of use to myself, but to others, that they may be saved? Certainly, in the Holy Scriptures, there are counsels laid down, by the knowledge and application of which a man of God may be able so to conduct the service of the church, or at least live and die with a pure conscience amongst sinners, so that the true life will not be lost after which alone gentle and humble Christian hearts aspire. But what other means contribute to it besides those the Lord has marked out—asking, seeking, knocking—that is,—prayer, reading, and mourning for sin!

"To perform these exercises I request your love to grant me a little interval till Easter. For what answer must I make to the Lord, my judge? Shall it be, I could not seek before I was already entangled in church affairs? Now if he should say to me, 'Thou unfaithful servant, if an estate of the church, on the harvest of which much labour has been bestowed, by any artifice whatever has been made a subject of dispute, and thou mightest thyself have to appear before earthly judges on a charge of neglecting a field which I had manured with my blood, wouldst thou not seek after the best counsel, and if the sentence was against thee, wouldst thou pass over the sea [to the supreme authorities at Rome]? And if thou wert absent a year or longer, would no complaint call thee back, in order that no other person might possess a

piece of land, which yet is not necessary for the souls but for the bodies of believers, whose hunger would be far more easily and willingly appeased by my living trees, provided they were carefully attended to?'" Augustin means that if ministers rightly apply themselves to preaching and pastoral duties, the zeal of Christian love in the church would do more for the relief of the necessitous than could be gained from any earthly possession whatever. He says this against the not inconsiderable number of persons in his times who cared more for the endowments and revenues of the church than for the salvation of souls, and whom he wished to remind that all their outward circumstances would be better if only due care were taken of the internal state.

The anniversary of the ordination of the bishops was a feast-day for their flocks. It was the day on which pious bishops brought with fresh weight before their souls the sanctity and responsibility of their office, and rendered an account to the Lord of the manner in which they had up to that time discharged it. "Indeed," says Augustin, on such an occasion, "ever since that burden of which a strict account must be given has been laid on my shoulders, anxiety on account of this my dignity has troubled me; yet I am far more moved by this consideration when the anniversary places it before my eyes, than if I had undertaken the office for the first time to-day." He added what it was that sustained and consoled him under this depressing consciousness. "The Lord Jesus would not have called his burden light if he had not been willing to bear it with those on whom it is laid. When I am alarmed to think what I am *to* you, I am comforted to think what I am *with* you; for *to* you I am a bishop—*with* you I am a Christian. The former is the name of the obligation laid upon me, the latter denotes the grace that is given to me. The one brings me danger, the other salvation. Lastly, by the storms of this restless office we are, as it were, driven about on the open sea; but when we think by whose blood we are redeemed, we come, by the repose which this thought brings with it, into a secure haven. The labour of our calling we have for ourselves alone, but our repose we find in the benefits which are common to all." The heart-reviving thought of the grace common to all Christians filled his soul and gave him new power, while it

excited new lively feeling of his obligations to the Redeemer in his calling. "When I am more rejoiced," he says, "to think that I am redeemed with you than that I am set over you, then, as the Lord has commanded, I shall more zealously serve you, that I may not be ungrateful for the inestimable honour of being your fellow-servant. For I must love my Redeemer, and I know what he said to Peter, 'Lovest thou me? Feed my sheep.' This he said to him the first, the second, and the third time. He asked him after his love, and he imposed a task upon him—for the greater the love, so much lighter will be the task."

There are always two wrong paths into which men are liable to go astray: one is, a haughty self-confidence which leads those who are filled with it to imagine that they can attain and accomplish everything by the exertion of their own unassisted powers; the other is, an indolent confidence in God, often proceeding from pride, only of another kind, by virtue of which a man fancies he may expect everything from the operation of the Divine Spirit, without employing the means that God has ordained. We find both these errors among those who sought to fill ecclesiastical office at this period. Thus, there were some persons who rejected all study, all application to mental culture, for the office of religious teachers, and maintained that everything must proceed from the operation of the Holy Ghost. In opposition to this notion Augustin says, "The Christian may learn without pride what man must learn from men; and whoever would teach others, let him impart without pride or envy. Let us not tempt Him in whom we have believed, in order that we may not be deceived by such cunning delusions of the Evil Spirit, to err so egregiously that we cannot go into the church to hear or learn the gospel, or that we cannot read the Holy Scriptures or hear other persons read and explain them, and that we should expect to be caught up to the third heavens and there hear 'unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter,' or to see the Lord Jesus there and to learn the gospel from him rather than from men. May we be on our guard against such dangerous temptations, and rather recollect that the apostle himself, although struck to the ground and instructed by a heavenly voice, yet was sent to a fellow-man in order to receive from him the sacra-

ment [of baptism] and to be incorporated into the church; and that the centurion, Cornelius, although the angel informed him that his prayer was heard, was referred to Peter for further instruction. Everything might have been done by the ministry of angels, but human nature would have been degraded, had it seemed as if God would not communicate his word by man to man. For how could it have been true what the Scripture says, 'The temple of God is holy, which temple are ye;' if God gave no responses from this human temple, and if everything that he wished men to learn was sent down direct from heaven or uttered by angels? In that case, the love which binds mankind together by the bond of unity would have no means of fusing dispositions, so to speak, together, and placing them in communion with each other, if *men were not to be taught by men.*" But others also were not wanting who thought they could become true preachers of the divine word by study and human art alone, depending on their own powers instead of depending on Him by whose power alone man can effect anything. Against such persons Augustin says:* "If our preacher delivers what is right, holy, and good, let him labour to the utmost that he may be heard intelligibly, willingly, and obediently, and he must be convinced that this is to be attained by devout prayer rather

* Agit itaque noster iste eloquens, cum et justa et sancta et bona dicit, neque enim alia debet dicere; agit ergo quantum potest cum ista dicit, ut intelligenter, ut libenter, ut obedienter audiatur; et hæc se posse, si potuerit, et in quantum potuerit, pietate magis orationum quam oratorum facultate non dubitet, ut orando pro se, ac pro illis, quos est allocuturus, sit orator antequam dictor. Ipsa hora jam ut dicat accedens, priusquam exserat proferentem linguam, ad Deum levet animam sitientem, ut eructet quod biberit, vel quod impleverit fundat. Cum enim de unaquaque re, quæ secundum fidem dilectionemque tractanda sunt, multa sint, quæ dicantur, et multi modi quibus dicantur ab eis, qui hæc sciunt; quis novit quid ad præsens tempus vel nobis dicere, vel per nos expediat audiri nisi qui corda omnium videt? Et quis facit ut quod oportet, et quemadmodum oportet dicatur a nobis, nisi in cujus manu sunt et nos et sermones nostri? Ac per hoc discat quidem omnia, quæ docenda sunt, qui et nosse vult, et docere, facultatemque dicendi, ut decet virum ecclesiasticum, comparet; ad horam vero ipsius dictionis illud potius bonæ menti cogitet convenire, quod Dominus ait: Nolite cogitare quomodo aut quid loquamini; dabitur enim vobis in illa hora quid loquamini: non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiritus Patris vestri qui loquitur in vobis.—August. *de Doct. Christ.* 4, § 32.

than by oratorical talent—that he must be a pleader in prayer for himself and for his hearers, before he can be a preacher. In the very hour when he is about to address them, before he opens his lips to preach, let him lift his thirsty soul to God, that he may pour forth what he himself has drawn from the fountain. For of everything which relates to faith and love, many things may be said, and in various ways, by those who are informed respecting them; but who can tell what is most useful for the present moment unless that Being who looks into all hearts? And who can cause us to express the right thing in the right manner, unless He in whose hands we and our works stand? Wherefore, whoever wishes to know and to teach, let him learn all that is to be taught, and let him acquire the faculty of teaching as becomes an ecclesiastic; but at the very time of preaching let him rather bear in mind the words of the Lord, 'Take no thought what ye shall speak, for in that hour it shall be given you what ye shall speak.'"

Those men who regarded themselves only as servants of the gospel, as instruments of the Holy Spirit, did not wish to attach men to their own persons; they sought not their own glory and the applause of men, but the glory of God and the salvation of men. They held themselves bound and felt compelled to express in its nakedness the ungodliness of human nature with whatever splendour it might deck itself, and to attack it more earnestly with the sword of the Spirit in proportion as it became more dangerous under a hypocritical profession of Christianity. Thus Augustin said: "Far be it from us to say to you, 'Live as you like; be assured God will not let any one perish, only hold firmly the Christian faith. [Of course he is here speaking only of a dead faith.] He will not let any of those who are redeemed by him perish. He will not let those perish for whom he shed his blood. If you are pleased with the public shows; go thither—what is the evil? Go, join in those feasts which are celebrated in all cities with public revelry. The mercy of God is great; it pardons all. Let us wear the garlands of young roses before they wither. (Wisd. of Sol. ii. 8.) When you will, hold feasts in the house of your God, you and yours be filled with food and wine, for those gifts are granted to us that we may enjoy them; for God has not given them to the ungodly and the heathen, and wished to deprive you of them.' If we talk

in this manner we shall perhaps collect larger auditories. But we shall not then publish the word of God, the word of Christ, but our own; we shall be shepherds who feed themselves, but not their flocks. What do I intend? what do I wish?" said Augustin to his church; "why do I speak? For what purpose do I live? What is the object of my life, but that we live with one another in the fellowship of Christ? That is my glory, my joy, my possession. But if ye do not hear and I am not silent, I shall indeed redeem my own soul, but I would not be saved without you."

In the great cities of the Grecian empire, the bad and corrupt manners proceeding from the theatres and the schools of the rhetoricians, had spread so far that the preachers were interrupted with loud plaudits. Chrysostom often emphatically reprobated this abuse, which served to nourish vanity—the most dangerous enemy attending all the gifts granted to man; and his own words testify that he himself had not felt altogether free from some workings of this vice, from which his own nation and times had suffered so much. "Many," he says, "take great pains to make a long discourse before the congregation, and when the multitude loudly testify their approbation, they fancy themselves equal to kings. But if they bring their discourse to an end without noise, this is worse to them than hell. This has been the ruin of the church, that you will listen to no discourse that leads you to repentance, but only to one which can entertain you; and that, too, by the tones of the speaker's voice, and the arrangement of the words, as if you were so many singers and musicians. And we are so faint-hearted and miserable that we fall in with your desires; we who were bound to combat them. And it is the same as if the father of a spoilt child, when he is ill, should give him cakes and cold drink, and anything else that pleases him, but is not anxious about what will do him good; and when the physician blames him, says in his defence: 'What could I do? I cannot bear to see the child cry.' Miserable man! and so you ruin your child! I should be sorry to call such a man my father. How much better it is to suffer pain for a short time, and then to be made well for ever, than to make some brief enjoyment the cause of ever-during sorrow! So it is with us, who give ourselves trouble to bring together well-arranged and well-

sounding words in order to please, not to profit; to be admired, not to instruct; to produce gratification, not contrition. Believe me, I say nothing but the truth. In such demonstrations of approbation there is at the instant something congenial to human nature, and I am pleased. But when I come home, and reflect that the persons who thus testified their approval derived no advantage from what they heard; that if they did gain anything whatever, it was all lost by the shouts and the plaudits; I am deeply grieved and sigh, and feel as if I had said everything in vain. Of what use is all my pains-taking, if my hearers derive no fruit from my ministry?" "Nothing," he says, "becomes a church so much as quiet and order. Such noises belong to theatres, markets, and processions. I think of all ways in which I can profit your souls; and this is not a little thing [that is, if they agreed not to interrupt the preacher again in that manner]. It would be of service, not only to you, but to ourselves, that we should not be led astray; that we should not love praise and honour; that we should say not what may contribute to our maintenance, but what is to our spiritual profit. Hence we are in ill repute with the heathen, who say that we do everything for show and applause." This last remark and warning of Chrysostom is, indeed, deserving of consideration in every age; since, although there are not openly avowed pagans in opposition to Christianity, yet there are never wanting those persons who gladly avail themselves of all that is artificial, showy, and vain, in connection with Christian services, to throw discredit on the whole. And, in fact, nothing is so much adapted to excite suspicion and destroy all right feeling, as when a parade is made of that which in its own unostentatious nature is most opposed to parade. In another homily Chrysostom says: "We would not speak in vain in order to gain your praise, to receive a testimony of your approbation, and then go away. Not only for such an object; far from it! but for your benefit. It is the greatest praise, and praise enough, if one wicked man be converted to goodness; if one who heretofore had been negligent becomes, through our exhortations, a zealous Christian. Thus to me will accrue the greatest praise and comfort, and to you the greatest gain and spiritual riches."

Jerome, in his instructions for an ecclesiastic, gives the

following advice: "Often read the Holy Scriptures; let them never be out of thy hand. Learn what thou hast to teach. Continue in that which thou hast learned, and which has been entrusted to thee; remember from whom thou hast learned it. Let not thy actions disgrace thy preaching. When thou preachest in the church, let no one quietly say to himself: 'Why dost thou not do what thou sayest?' "

When, as we learn from Chrysostom, in the passage quoted above, eloquence in sermons was made an occasion of vanity, the consequence was, that many persons were most of all misled by that which should have contributed to their salvation. On this point Chrysostom says:* "Thou hast the gift of eloquence and of teaching. Do not believe that on this account thou hast something more than others. Thou oughtest to be the more humble, because more gifts are imparted to thee. Be fearful for this; for often this is likely to be thy ruin, unless thou art sober-minded. Why art thou conceited? because thou teachest by words? But it is easy to be wise in words? Teach me by thy life; that is the best teaching. Thou sayest that it is proper to practise moderation, and thou utterest a long discourse on this, and pourest forth a flood of words. But he speaks better than thyself who teaches this lesson by his actions; for precepts are implanted not so much by words as by the actions of the soul. If thou hast not performed the work, thou hast not only done no good by the words, but hast done harm. Better is it to be silent. Why? because thou makest the thing impossible for me; for I think, if thou who sayest it, dost not do what is right, I shall be more easily pardoned for the neglect of it, since I say nothing of the kind. Unto the wicked God saith,

* *Μηδὲν εἶναι νομίσῃς σαυτοῦ. Λόγον ἔχεις καὶ διδασκαλικὴν χάριν; Μὴ διὰ τούτων νομίσῃς πλέον τι τῶν ἄλλων ἔχειν. Διὰ τοῦτο μάλιστα ταπεινοῦσθαι ὀφείλεις, ὅτι πλειόνων ἠξιώθης δωρεῶν· ᾧ γὰρ πλεῖον ἀφέθη, πλειον ἀγαπήσει. Οἰκοῦν καὶ ταπεινοῦσθαι χρὴ, ὅτι τοὺς ἄλλους παρελθὼν, εἰς σὲ ἐπένευσεν ὁ θεος· φοβοῦ διὰ τοῦτο. Πολλάκις γάρ σοι καὶ ἀπολειας τοῦτο γίνεται αἴτιον, ἂν μὴ νήφῃς· τί μέγα φρονεῖς; ὅτι διδάσκεις διὰ λόγων; αλλ' εὔκολον τοῦτο τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν ἐν ῥήμασι· δίδαξὸν με διὰ τοῦ βίου τοῦ σοῦ. Αὕτη ἡ διδασκαλία ἀρίστη. Λέγεις ὅτι δεῖ μετριάζειν, καὶ μακρὸν ὑπὲρ τούτου λόγον ἀποτείνεις, καὶ ῥητορεύεις ῥέων ἀκωλύτως; ἀλλὰ σοῦ βελτίων ἐκεῖνος φησιν, ὁ δι' ἔργων τοῦτο παιδεύων ἐμέ.*—Chrysost. *in Act. Apost. Hom.* xxx. § 3.

'What hast thou to do, to declare my statutes?' (Psa. l. 16.) For greater is the disgrace when a person teaches what is right by his words, while his actions contradict his words. This has been the cause of much evil in the church."

The genuine bishop did not wish to set himself up as a teacher and master; he wished only to present himself as a scholar of the one heavenly Teacher. It was his earnest endeavour, by word and deed, to introduce all the members of his congregation into Christ's school, that they might learn immediately from him. Such an one was Augustin. He thus addressed his flock, after reading to them John viii. 31: "Ye know that we all have one teacher, and we find ourselves in the same discipleship under him. And we are not on this account your teachers, because we speak to you from above; but the teacher of us all is He who dwells in us all. He has spoken in his gospel to us all, and he has said to us what I now say to you. But he has said of us, both of us and of you, 'If ye abide in my words,'—certainly not in my words, which I am now speaking to you, but the words of Him who said in the gospel, 'If ye abide in my words, then are ye my disciples indeed.' We abide in Him by a consciousness of our poverty; he abides in us by his mercy." The same writer says: "Ye must indeed consider who I am who ventures to speak to you, and of what things I venture to speak to you; I venture to discourse to you of divine things as a man, of spiritual things as a carnal person, of eternal things as a mortal. If I would live healthfully in the house of God, I must keep at a distance from a vain arrogance. I conceive according to my capacity what I set before you; where it is opened to me, I enjoy it with you; where it remains closed, I join with you in knocking.' If any one does not understand, because it has not been said by me in a right way, let him pardon human weakness, and pray to God's goodness; for we have Christ within us as a Teacher. If ye cannot lay hold of something by my mouth and your ear, then turn in your hearts to Him who teaches me what I utter, and who will impart to you as he thinks good. He who knows what he gives, and to whom he gives it, will not be wanting to the suppliant, and will open to him who knocks. And if he does not give alike, let no one think himself forsaken. Perhaps he delays to give something, but he sends no one

away hungry. For if he does not give at the instant, it is in order to prove the faith of the seeker, and not because he despises him who asks."

Hence it was the zealous endeavour of an Augustin, as of a Chrysostom, to lead the members of his church to the fountain of the Divine Word, that without human intervention, they might draw from it for themselves, and learn to apply what they then drew to practical purposes. Thus Augustin says, in reference to a portion of Scripture on which he had lectured: "Our Lord and God, who heals all the diseases of the soul, has laid before us in Holy Writ, which is his own repository, many means of cure, and we must act as his assistants in order to apply them to our wounds. For we must not consider ourselves as assistants sent out by the Physician to heal others, without requiring to be healed ourselves. When we look to him, when we give ourselves up to him with all our hearts in order to be healed by him, then we shall be all healed."

Augustin regarded it as "the duty of the Christian pastor to open the fountain of Holy Writ to his thirsty flock, and to supply them with its pure water;"* and while he conducted them to a right understanding of it, to guard against possible mistakes. The meetings which in the North African church, as in many other parts, were held on Saturdays, Augustin devoted particularly to the study of the Bible; especially because on this day he had more leisure than on Sundays, and the attendance was not so numerous, but consisted only of those who took a deep interest in an acquaintance with the Divine Word. So Chrysostom often, in his preaching, broke off in the middle of an important investigation, which he promised to finish on the next occasion, in order that his hearers might have an opportunity, in the meanwhile, of reflecting on the subject, examining the Scripture, and conversing with one another respecting it. Thus he says, in one of his sermons: "I have said this, my brethren, in order that you may observe how anxious I am that you should pray both for me and yourselves—that the Lord would grant that I may speak worthy of the subject,

* Videtis quam periculose auditur si non intelligitur. Videtis quemadmodum pertineat ad officium pastoris, opertos fontes (scripturæ) aperire, et aquam puram innoxiam sitientibus ovibus ministrare. — August. *Serm.* 128, § 7.

and that you may be capable of receiving it in a right manner. Until the question is solved, examine it yourselves; ask others, and say: "This question our bishop has proposed to us to-day, and if the Lord grant, he will also explain it." Augustin endeavoured to impress his people, with the blessed consequences of an intimate acquaintance with the Divine Word, in the following beautiful passage: "Why dost delay with thy conversion? What thou fearest to lose as a good man, perhaps thou wilt lose as a bad man. If thou losest it as a good man, he who has taken it away will be thy Comforter. The gold is withdrawn from thy coffers, but thy heart is full of faith. Outwardly thou art poor, but inwardly thou art rich. Thou bearest riches with thee, which thou wouldst not lose, even if thou escaped naked from shipwreck. The ungodly suffer greater detriment. Their house is empty; still more empty is their conscience. When an ungodly man suffers loss, nothing outward remains to him which he can hold fast, and within he has no resting-place. He has lost that which gave him opportunity to exhibit himself with his wealth before the eye of his fellow-men, and he can fall back on nothing within him, for he has nothing. He has not imitated the ant, 'and *provided his meat in the summer*.' (Prov. vi. 8.) What do I say—'when it was summer?' When he had the repose of life, when his worldly affairs were flourishing, when time was at his disposal, and all men called him fortunate—that was his summer. He would have imitated the ant, had he heard the word of God, thus collected his meat, and laid it up within him. But trials and afflictions came; hard winter came, the storm of fear, the chill of sorrow; there was some loss, or dangerous illness, or the death of a relation, or a disgrace, a humiliation,—it was winter. The ant turns to what she has collected in the summer, and within, in her retirement, where no one sees it, she is revived by the labours of the summer. As she collected this in the summer, all saw it; but while she feeds on it in the winter, no one sees it. And what does this mean? See God's ant; he rises up daily, and goes to the house of God, prays, hears the Bible read, sings a hymn, digests what he has heard, meditates upon it, brings his provisions into the store-house. Such is the conduct of the intelligent hearer; every one sees him go to church, return from church,

hear the sermon, hear God's word read, find a Bible, open and read it; all this men may see when it happens. Misfortune comes upon him: other persons lament for him as an unfortunate man; they know not what he has within. The ant now enjoys the fruits of its summer labours; thou canst see it collect these fruits, but thou canst not see it enjoying them. The Christian may lose what God hath given him, but God himself he cannot lose." Augustin recommends the reading of the Holy Scriptures, as a guide to right self-examination and self-knowledge. To those who think themselves righteous, because they commit no gross sins, he says: "Certainly, when thou hast contemplated the law of holiness in the Holy Scriptures, thou wilt, whatever progress thou hast made, find a sinner within thee."

Against those persons who seek for an excuse in their worldly occupations for neglecting the Scriptures, he says: "Do not be so fettered by present things as to say, I have no time to read, I have no time to hear; such conduct is to press down the ear to the earth." He appeals to the fact that the Holy Scriptures, which contain remedies for every disease of the soul, were read, and publicly sold throughout the world.

Still, on account of the knowledge of the art of reading not being universally spread, it could not be supposed that all could read the Bible themselves; the church-teachers took special care that all persons who wished, might become acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, by the repeated reading of portions of them at divine service. "Perhaps some of you," said Augustin, "cannot read, or have not time for reading; but they might at least, by attentive hearing, not forget the doctrine of salvation." He calls upon his hearers to question him privately on passages of Scripture which were still obscure to them. "If anything strikes them," he says, "on which they desire to question me more closely, they would at another time find, in the name of Christ, an open ear with me." But he also gives them, in order to learn how to understand the Scriptures themselves, the rule, owing to the non-observance of which the Bible had so long remained to himself a closed book; namely, to examine with humility and prayer, with an ardent love for divine things, to hold fast with confiding, child-like faith what they had once clearly known, and faithfully to apply it to practice, and thus ad-

vance from the obscure to the clear. "Hold fast and devoutly receive what is revealed, and thus you will merit that the obscure shall be made clear." "When we live piously, when we believe in Christ, when we do not wish to fly out of the nest before the time," he says, "even the opposition of erroneous teachers will only lead us to a deeper knowledge of the divine mysteries." "With simple and confiding faith we must adhere firmly to the Lord Christ, in order that he may open to believers what is hidden in him. There is no difficulty in the obscure meaning when we are assisted by the Holy Spirit. Even your longing, your wishing to understand, is a prayer to God; from Him you must expect help." As Augustin laid down rules to his congregation for the right interpretation and application of Holy Writ, so also he considered it his duty to warn them especially of the errors that were rife in his own times—that wilfulness with which persons imagined they could explain and adjust all things as they pleased; so that however much anything might contradict the language of Scripture, they found a point of connection, or an excuse for it. Against the indulgence of an allegorising humour, he says, "First of all we must firmly hold the fact as a foundation, and then inquire into its meaning; otherwise, without this foundation, we shall only build castles in the air."

He represents it as a characteristic of Holy Writ, that it speaks intelligibly for all kinds of men, unlearned as well as learned, and yet furnishes inexhaustible materials for the deepest reflection: "The weak and the strong both drink at the same stream, and every one quenches his thirst. The water does not say, I am sufficient for the weak, and it does not reject the strong: nor does it say, Let the strong come here, but if the weak come, he will be carried away by the force of the current. It flows so securely and so gently, that it quenches the thirst of the strong spirit, and yet does not deter the weak. It utters the voice of a Cicero or a Plato. The unlearned, those of weaker understanding, whoever is disposed, let him venture. To such it resounds, '*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;*' and who may not venture to drink of this water? For whom do the Psalms resound, and who can say, 'It is too high for me?' They utter mysteries of the kingdom of God, yet so

that children may be delighted to hear them, that the unlearned may come and pour forth their full hearts in song." Thus, he writes to a person on whom he urged the examination of the Scriptures: * "How accessible is the language of Scripture, although few can penetrate into its depths. What it contains, open to all, it utters like an intimate friend, to the heart of learned and unlearned alike. And what it conceals in mysteries it does not present in lofty language, which the sluggish and untaught mind dare not approach, like a pauper before a man of wealth; but invites all in simple speech, whom it nourishes, not only by manifest truth, but excites by concealed truth—the same truth being sometimes more manifest, sometimes more concealed." He represents to his hearers the higher joys which the examination of Holy Writ insures under all circumstances. "Whence do those who still walk on earth, draw spiritual joys? From the Word of God, and the examination of a parable of Holy Writ—from the sweetness of the peace which is preceded by the labour of seeking; here is a holy and pure joy. This is not to be found in gold and silver, in feasting and revelry, in the tricks of the theatre, in striving after perishable honours, or in their possession; for in all these things much is wanting to true joy, and according to this book there can be none. Rather the soul which is raised above inferior objects, and finds its joy here, says what it can affirm truly and confidently, 'The ungodly have told me of these joys; but these are not to be compared with the joys in thy law, O Lord!" †

* Modus autem ipse dicendi, quo sancta Scriptura contexitur, quam omnibus accessibilis, quamvis paucissimis penetrabilis. Ea quæ aperta continet, quasi amicus familiaris sive fuco ad cor loquitur indoctorum atque doctorum. Ea vero quæ in mysteriis occultat, nec ipsa eloquio superbo erigit, quo non audeat accedere mens tardiuscula et inerudita, quasi pauper ad divitem; sed invitat omnes humili sermone, quos non solum manifesta pascat, sed etiam secreta exerceat veritate, hoc in promptis quod in reconditis habens. Sed ne aperta fastidirentur, eadem rursus operta desiderantur, desiderata quodam modo renovantur, renovata suaviter intimantur. His salubriter et prava corriguntur, et parva nutriuntur, et magna oblectantur ingenia. Ille huic doctrinæ inimicus est animus qui vel errando eam nescit esse saluberrimam, vel adit ægrotando medicinam.—August. *Ep.* 137, *ad Volusianum*, § 18.

† Psa. cxix. 85; but not according to the Hebrew text.

Ambrose, bishop of Milan, also frequently exhorted the members of his congregation, in his sermons, to the daily examination of the Scriptures. "Under temptations the soul is made vigorous by the Word of God; for this is the vital principle of our souls, by which they are nourished and regulated. Thus, as the Word of God increases in our souls, when it is received into them, is understood and apprehended, so then life increases; and so, on the other hand, when the Word of God is lessened in our souls, their life is lessened. Hence we must by all means strive to value what is higher than anything else, to store up the word of God within us, and to receive it into our spirit and mind, to incorporate it with our habits of thinking and acting." Again, he says:* "Thou must not run through the Word of God in a superficial manner. When thou wishest to buy a field or a house, thou callest into thy council an experienced judge, and considerest exactly what is right; and thou dost not trust thyself, lest thou shouldest be in any way deceived. But now, shouldest thou sell thyself, is thy own price treated of? is it estimated what thou art, how much credit thou hast, what thou gainest? not land, not gold, not precious stones, but the Lord Jesus Christ, with whom no price and no ornament can be compared. Take for thy counsellors Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Peter, Paul, John; take the great counsellor Jesus, the Son of God, that you may gain the Father." Ambrose also directs every Christian immediately to the source of light, to that Teacher who alone is the true teacher: "For how can lying man teach the truth who knows it not himself? and justly the Lord says, 'Call no man master, for one is your master, Christ.' But God enlightens the souls of all individuals, and imparts to them the clearness of knowledge, if thou only openest the door of thy heart to him, and admittest

* Tota ergo die in lege meditare; non perfunctorie tibi debet esse transcursio. Si agrum emere valis, si mercaris domum, prudentiorem adhibes, et quid juris sit diligenter consideras et ne in aliquo forte fallacis, tibi ipse non credis. At nunc tu ipse emendus es tibi, de tuo pretio tractatur, considera quid sis, quod nomen habeas, quid adquiris tibi? non agrum, non pecuniam, non gemmarum monilia; sed Jesus Christum, cui nulla possunt pretia, nulla ornamenta conferri. Adhibe tibi consiliarios Moysen, Esaiam, Hieremian, Petrum, Paulum, Johannem, ipsum magnum consiliarium Jesum Dei Filium, ut adquiras Patrem. —Ambrosius, *Expos. in Psa.* cxviii. *Serm.* 13, § 7.

the light of heavenly grace. If thou doubtest, carefully inquire; for he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks, it shall be opened."

Jerome thus writes, recommending the study of the Scriptures: "I pray you, my dearest brother, to live among such things, to think upon such things, to know nothing else, to seek nothing else. Does not the seat of the kingdom of heaven already appear to thee to be on earth? I am not so rash and stupid as to pledge myself that this is to be, and that we are to eat on earth the fruits of the tree which has its roots in heaven; but I admit it is my endeavour. I prefer myself to the man who sits [*i.e.* who does not strive, but remains sitting there]. I do not wish to be a teacher, but I promise to be thy companion. To him that asks, it is given; to him that knocks, it is opened: the seeker finds. Let us learn on earth the things of which the clear intelligence remains for us in heaven." He exhorts Leta to make her daughter early acquainted with the Bible: "Instead of jewels and silks, let her love the Holy Scriptures; let her go over the gospels, never to lay them down; let her imbibe with all the longing of her heart the Acts and the Apostolic Epistles."

Chrysostom, in his comment on Psa. i. 1, observes: "As the tree planted by the water-brooks, since it is continually moistened by the water, yields to no irregularity of the atmosphere, so likewise the soul which dwells by the streams of Holy Writ, and is continually watered from that source, and receives the dew of the Holy Spirit, will be overcome by no change of circumstances, although all the evil influences of the world press on such a soul. Nothing else can give such consolation to sufferers; for everything else is transitory, and guarantees only transitory consolation: but the reading of the Scriptures is intercourse with God. And what in the whole world can sink a person in sorrow if God comforts him? Let us, therefore, occupy ourselves with reading the Scriptures, not merely during these two hours, but continually; and let every one, when he goes home from church, take the Bible in his hand, and meditate on the portions that have been read here, if he would derive sufficient advantage from Scripture; for a tree growing by the water-side is supplied with water not merely for two or three hours in the day, but all day, and all night, and consequently is full of foliage and loaded with

fruit, although no one has watered it. Thus the man who always reads the Holy Scriptures, although he has no one to explain it to him, derives great advantage from incessant reading." The same father says:* "Wait for no other teacher; thou hast the Word of God. There is no other such teacher. Other teachers often conceal much from vanity and envy. Hear this, ye men of the world, and provide yourselves with Bibles, as dispensaries for the health of your souls. Ignorance of the Holy Scriptures is the cause of all evils. If we go unarmed to the battle, how can we escape? Throw not everything upon us; ye are sheep entrusted to us for guidance, but sheep not irrational, but endowed with reason." When exhorting the members of his congregation to procure Bibles, he says: "Seest thou not the smiths, the goldsmiths, or artisans of whatever class, how they are prepared with all the tools of their craft, and when pressed with hunger or poverty, they would rather suffer anything than to procure food by selling their tools? Many often prefer to pay interest for money, in order to support their families; and very properly, for they know that by selling these tools their skill in their trade is entirely useless, and the whole ground of their success in life is taken away. But if those tools remain in their possession, they are able, in course of time, to pay all their debts by working at their trade. We must be like-minded. For what the hammer, and anvil, and bellows, are to such people as instruments of their craft, that, to us as Christians, are the writings of the prophets and apostles. As they melt down, or change the shape of old vessels, so also with these instruments we remodel our souls; we make the crooked straight; the old, new. And those persons can only show their skill in changing the form, for they cannot transform the materials of the vessels; they cannot turn silver into gold. But it is not so with thee; thou canst do something more; thou canst take a wooden vessel and make it into a golden one." [He adduces in proof of this, 2 Tim. ii. 20, &c.]

* Μηδὲ περιμείνῃς ἕτερον διδάσκαλον· ἔχεις τα λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ. Οὐδείς σε διδάσκει ὡς ἐκεῖνα. Οὗτος μὲν γὰρ πολλὰ καὶ διὰ κενοδοξίαν. καὶ δ.ὰ βασκανίαν επικρύπτει πολλακις. Ἀκούσατε, παρακαλῶ, παντες οἱ βιωτικοί, καὶ κτᾶσθε βίβλια φάρμακα τῆς ψυχῆς. . . . Τοῦτο πάντων αἴτιον τῶν κακῶν, τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι τας γραφάς. Χωρὶς ὅπλων εἰς πόλεμον βαδίζομεν.—Chrysost. *in Ep. ad Coloss. Hom.* 9, § 1.

"Let us, therefore, not neglect to furnish ourselves with Bibles. Let us collect not gold, but the Word of God." And to those who excused themselves by alleging the obscurity of the Bible, he says: "On this account the grace of God has so arranged matters, that these books were composed by publicans, fishermen, tent-makers, and shepherds, ignorant and illiterate men, in order that no ignorant person might take refuge in such an excuse, but that what was said might be intelligible to all; so that artisans, servants, widows, and the rudest, might gain advantage from it." He then adds: "Take the Bible in thy hand; hold fast what thou understandest; often review that which at present is unintelligible to thee. And if by repeated reading thou canst not after all find out the meaning, go to the teacher, ask advice of him, only show greater zeal; and if God sees greater zeal in thee, he will not despise thy watching and anxiety; but although no man instruct thee in what thou seekest, He himself will certainly reveal it to thee." In proof he adduces the history of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts viii. 30, 31), and then makes this application of it: "God saw the man's zeal, and therefore sent him a teacher. And now, though there is no Philip here, the Spirit who moved Philip is here."

In various ways the bishops stood in close connection with the members of their congregations, which made it possible for them to know them more accurately, and to operate upon them according to their peculiar circumstances. The people were desirous that the bishops should visit individual families,—a desire that arose more frequently from vanity than from religious concern, as Chrysostom was obliged to complain in his work on the priesthood. Of Augustin, his biographer Posidonius relates, that he would not be drawn off, by such solicitations of vanity, from those things which more nearly concerned his ecclesiastical calling, and from those labours in which he engaged for the benefit of his contemporaries and of succeeding ages, but confined his visits to the houses of distressed widows and orphans. Sick persons often sent for the bishops, in order to receive consolation from them; that they might pray by their bedside, and impart their blessing. Laics also came to them, to converse on religious subjects. Thus we find that Ambrose was burdened the whole day with a multiplicity of concerns, and the

greater part such as he felt more oppressive, because they were foreign to his spiritual calling; yet in the few moments of leisure, which he so gladly devoted to reflection on divine things and spiritual studies, he was ready to speak to every one. Especially on feast-days, a meeting of the laity with the bishops often took place, in order to ask them questions on religious subjects. Members of their congregations of various ranks, high and low, who met with perplexities in their daily business or official duties, frequently applied to them, which gave faithful bishops an opportunity of correcting many evils, and of warning against them.

The decision of civil causes in the church, which was permitted by the laws of the emperor Constantine, when two parties appeared at their tribunal, this examination and decision of civil causes certainly occupied much time, which spiritually-minded men would gladly have employed for other purposes: it involved them in many worldly things, exposed them to many calumnies, when they decided simply according to the merits of the case; yet they obtained, by this means, an opportunity of knowing more accurately the members of their congregations, and their moral character; they could thus scatter among them suitable practical lessons, point out the sinfulness of that selfishness which gave rise to these disputes, and urge them to unity. Pious bishops, in submitting to this burden, sacrificed inclination to duty, and in their devoting their attention to worldly things, practised mortification to the world; while others became immersed in secularity, and lost sight of the spiritual design of their vocation. Augustin belonged to the former class. He says, on Psalm cxix. 115 (which verse, according to the Alexandrian version and the Vulgate, reads thus: "Depart from me, ye evil, and I will examine the commandments of my God"): "The wicked certainly exercise us in obedience to the commands of God, but they draw us away from the examination of them, not only when they persecute us, but also when they show us respect and honour, and yet require that we should engage in satisfying their corrupt and busy desires, and employ our time upon them, or at least when they oppress the weak, and force them to bring their cause before us. And we do not venture to say to such persons, 'Who hath made me a judge or divider of an inheritance over you?' For the apostle has

committed such investigations to members of the church, by enjoining Christians not to appear before the judgment-seat of heathen magistrates. We also do not venture to say to those who do not seize on the property of others, but only eagerly seek after their own: 'Beware of covetousness;' or to place before them the man to whom it was said: 'Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast prepared?' for if we say such things to them, they do not turn away from us; but they urge, torment, entreat, and vociferate, that we should rather surrender ourselves to that which they love than to that which we love—the examination of the divine law. O, with what disgust at this noisy restlessness, and with what longing after the Divine Word is it said, 'Depart from me, ye evil doers; I will examine the commandments of my God!' May those obedient persons among believers pardon me, who on account of their worldly engagements seldom visit me, and are easily satisfied with my judgment, who do not disturb me by their disputes, but rather comfort me by their obedience. We may at least use this exclamation of the Psalmist, on account of those who stubbornly dispute with one another." "Two persons come to a spiritual judge; both believe that they are in the right. Before judgment is pronounced both say: 'Decide as you please, only decide; we should deserve to be condemned if we rebelled against your sentence.' Both love the judge before he decides. But when the judgment has been given, it must be against one; and neither of the two knows against which it will be. If the judge seeks to please both, he receives the praise of man as his reward. But see what he gains and what he gives up. He gives up what abides to all eternity for the transitory, the reality for a nullity. But if he had God before his eyes, he would, looking up to God as the judge's judge, pass sentence against one of the two. Now, although the person against whom the sentence has been passed, since he sees himself bound not so much, indeed, by the laws of the church as by the laws of the emperor, must obey; yet he will cast discontented looks at the judge, and calumniate him as much as he can. He was partial to the rich, says the man; he has received something from him, or he fears to offend him. But if the sentence is favourable to the poor, then the rich man says: 'In

order to avoid the imputation of being severe upon the poor, he has suppressed justice, and has given judgment contrary to truth.' "

The bishops were looked upon as the guardians of the weak, who were exposed at this period to so many attacks of despotic and arbitrary power, and in order to fulfil this duty, connected with their office under existing circumstances, they needed a powerful faith to raise them victoriously above the fear of man. Fathers, when at the point of death, committed their young children to them for protection and education; for bishops in general were regarded as the natural protectors of widows and orphans.

Ambrose thus writes to his clergy: "It is a peculiar distinction of your office, when the assault of a powerful person, whom widows and orphans cannot resist, is warded off by the help of the church; when you show that the command of the Lord has more power over you than the favour of the powerful. You know how often I have fought against the imperial power for the property of widows entrusted to my care." The property of a widow was entrusted to the church at Pavia, under the emperor Valentinian II. Some person managed to procure an imperial order, by which it was to be put into his hands. It was demanded repeatedly in the name of the emperor, with threats in case of refusal; but the bishop, who acted according to the counsel of Ambrose, steadily withheld it, opposed the laws of God to the emperor, and quoted the example of Heliodorus, in 2 Maccabees iii. His representations made an impression at the moment, and the bishop gained time to restore the property into the widow's own hands.

The mediation of the bishops was also frequently solicited in reference to special disasters, and for whole cities and provinces. Augustin, in his sermons, describes cases which frequently occurred: "A person, pale and trembling, runs into the church, is eager to see the bishop, and falls at his feet. The bishop asked, 'What is the matter?' He answered, 'Sir, they will lay violent hands upon me; I shall be cast into prison. Deliver me; have pity on me!' Or, if the danger is still greater, they all rush to the bishop with the cry, 'Hasten for his life!' (Curre propter animam!)" Augustin closes this striking instance with the beautiful

exhortation: "I hasten to rescue thy body; mayest thou so run as to rescue thy soul. He whom thou fearest can only rage against thy body; do not thou rage against thy own soul! You see, when the earthly life of a man is in danger, his friends run for him, how they run to the church, how the bishop is besought to leave what he is engaged in, and to hasten to his relief. If thou runnest a hundred miles for this life, how many miles must thou not run for eternal life!" Augustin availed himself of such analogies in order to lead the thoughts of his hearers from the earthly to the heavenly. "Sometimes people flee to the church, and commonly we regard them as refractory persons, who wish to be free from the yoke of their masters, but not from the yoke of their sins. Sometimes, also, those who have been subject to an unrighteous yoke flee to the church, who, though free-born, were held in servitude, and when the bishop does not labour to recover their lost freedom, they regard him as hard-hearted. Let us all flee to Christ, and pray to God that he would be our deliverer from sin." In another sermon he says: "It is often said of us, the bishop is gone to that person of rank, and what does the bishop mean by visiting him? And yet you all know that your necessities oblige us to go whither we do not wish; to stand at the door to wait while the worthy and the unworthy enter in; to send in our names, and at last scarcely to be admitted; and then to carry ourselves with humility, to supplicate, sometimes to give a pledge, sometimes to go away sorrowful. Who could endure this, if we were not compelled? And we conduct ourselves towards these persons of rank, if they are Christians, as we are bound to do towards Christians; if they are heathens, as we ought to conduct ourselves to heathens—we who are bound to be benevolent to all."

It is true that worldly-minded bishops converted the duty of mediating for the unfortunate into a pretext for mixing in worldly concerns, and entering into high life. Of such persons Jerome says: "It is a shame that before the door of a priest of the poor and crucified Saviour, who was supported by others, are to be seen standing the lictors of the consuls and the guard of soldiers, and that the judge of the province is entertained more sumptuously with thee than in his palace. But if thou pretendest that thou dost this in order to be able

to intercede for the unfortunate and oppressed, thou must be answered, the Judge of this world will show more regard to an ecclesiastic who practises abstinence than to a rich one, and he will honour thy holiness more than thy riches. Or if he is such a man that he only listens to the intercession of ecclesiastics for any oppressed person while amongst his cups, I would gladly dispense with such a benefit, and instead of applying to the judge, I will pray to Christ, who can help more effectually and speedily than the judge; for 'it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man; it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.' (Psa. cxviii. 8, 9.)"

The bishops, moreover, often received country people, who in these times were severely oppressed by excessive taxation. On such an occasion Augustin wrote a letter of severe remonstrance to a man of rank whom he had baptized, Romulus, who sought to obtain the heavy rents which his country tenants had already paid to his steward, under the pretence that this person had not been authorized to demand them: "Truth is at the same time sweet and bitter; when it is sweet it saves, and when it is bitter it heals. If you are not afraid to take the draught which I present to you in this epistle, you will acknowledge what I say to be true. May all the reproaches you have uttered against me, hurt yourself as little as they do me; and oh! may the injustice which you have committed against the unfortunate and the poor injure you not more than those against whom you have committed it. For they suffer only for a short time, but do you look well to it what is prepared for you in the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every one according to his works. I supplicate his mercy, that he would lead you to repentance in his own way, and not allow you to live on unchanged to that day in which there will be no space for repentance; that he who has given you the fear of God, on account of which I do not despair of you, may open your mind, that you may know, abhor, and amend your doings. For what now appears to you as insignificant or a nullity, is so great an evil that when your cooled passion will allow you to be conscious of it, you will water the earth with your tears, in order to implore the mercy of God. Fear God, if you would not deceive yourselves; I call

your souls to witness that I fear more for you, when I say this, than for those as whose intercessor I now address you."

The inhabitants of Cappadocia, in the year 371, were thrown into great consternation by the division of the province into two parts: by this division they had lost much of their gains, and their taxes were doubled. Basil, the bishop of the metropolis Cæsarea, would gladly have undertaken a journey to the imperial court, in order to intercede for the oppressed; but ill-health and his ecclesiastical engagements held him back. Hence he applied to a distinguished person belonging to the province for his mediation. He requested him "not to remain at rest when his native land was altogether pressed down, but betake himself to court and frankly represent that they ought not to think of having two provinces instead of one; for they had not brought the second province from another world, but had managed matters just as if the owner of a horse or an ox had divided it into two parts, and fancied that he had now two animals instead of one. But a person acting thus would not have made two, but killed one." He wished also to represent to those who had the greatest influence in the government, that this was not the right method of aggrandizing a kingdom; for its power consisted not in the number, but in the good condition of its provinces: for "we believe," he wrote, "that perhaps some from ignorance of the truth, and others to avoid saying anything unpleasant, since the whole was a matter of indifference to them, whatever might happen, have suffered it to take place."

In rebellions and political revolutions the bishops rescued many unfortunate persons, and by their persevering intercession prevented much bloodshed. Thus in particular Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, laboured in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius the Great, a stormy period for the West. His disposition is shown in the following words: "I do no one injustice when I honour God more than all men, and, trusting in him, am not afraid to utter to you emperors what I consider right, according to the measure of my insight." He wrote to the Emperor Theodosius, when he had victoriously suppressed the rebellions in the West, as follows: "You have all that you could wish; I must therefore annex my highest

wish to that which you already possess. You are a pious, gracious prince, yet I wish you a greater increase of piety, which is the best gift of the Lord, that the church, as it enjoys through you peace and rest for the innocent, may, through your clemency, obtain also pardon for the guilty." He reminds the emperor, that "since God had done such great things for him, people were justified in expecting great things from him."

The emperor, exasperated by a riot at Thessalonica (in the year 388), was disposed to take severe revenge on the whole city. Ambrose, who had been apprised of the emperor's intentions, made representations which induced Theodosius to promise that no blood should be shed. But as flatterers again weakened the impression of truth, the emperor gave way afresh to his resentment; he surrendered the city to the fury of the soldiers, to which thousands, the innocent with the guilty, fell a sacrifice. Theodosius came to Milan, and wished, as he was wont, to receive the Holy Supper from the hands of the revered bishop. The emperor had committed a crime, which, according to the regulations of the church, would exclude him from the assembly of believers. The church could see in him only the man, not the emperor, even as in God's sight there is no respect of persons. Ambrose could not bring his mind to accept a gift for the altar from one who had shed so much innocent blood, and thus make him secure in his sins, or communicate the body of the Lord to him, or in his presence, until he had acknowledged his sins and professed repentance; but he was anxious to connect with zeal for the law of the Lord and Christian frankness, the respect due from Christians to the civil authorities—to unite the innocence of the dove with the wisdom of the serpent, which does not allow persons to be carried away by the sudden impulses of even justly-excited feeling, but takes account of time and circumstances. It might have flattered his vanity to meet the emperor as he approached the altar, to have inveighed publicly against his conduct, and called him to repent before the church. But thus he would have lowered the respect of the emperor among the people; and it could not be calculated beforehand what impression such treatment might make on the passionate emperor. It was another thing to represent to the emperor in writing what Ambrose must

otherwise have upbraided him with publicly and by word of mouth, but which he could now meditate upon at his leisure. Ambrose, on this account, thought it best to avoid an interview with the emperor at Milan, on the ground of ill health, from which he was really suffering, and afterwards wrote him a letter. "If Ambrose admitted you to communion," he wrote to him, "you would thereby receive no forgiveness of your sins; but I should have had so much more to answer for, if no one told you that you ought to be first reconciled to God." After holding up to him the example of King David's repentance, he added: "I have not written this in order to put you to shame, but that the example of such a king may urge you to put away the sin from your reign; and this you may do, if you humble your soul before God. For only by tears and repentance can sin be removed. No angel nor archangel can blot out sin. And the Lord himself, who alone can say, 'I am with you,' when we have sinned, forgives our sins only when we approach him in penitence. I counsel, I entreat, I exhort you, because I am so pained that you, who were an example of extraordinary piety, who had shown favour to so many criminals, should feel no compunction at the death of so many innocent persons. Although you have been so successful in war, although you have also acquired glory in other affairs, yet piety must be always the crown of your works. The Evil Spirit envies you the success you have had. Conquer him while you still possess the means of conquering him.

"I have no cause to wish to be contumacious towards you, but I have cause to be afraid for you. I cannot venture to celebrate the Supper in your presence. Ought that which is not allowed when the blood of one innocent person has been shed, to be allowed when the blood of so many innocent persons has been shed? I cannot believe it.

"Must it not be desirable for me to possess the emperor's favour, so that I should certainly act in accordance with your will, if the matter allow it?"

Ambrose, in a funeral oration for this emperor, thus speaks of him: "I loved the man who preferred the person who told the strictest truth to the flatterer. He laid aside all his imperial insignia, he publicly bewailed in the church the sin into which he had fallen, being deceived by others. With

sighs and tears he implored the forgiveness of his sins. He was ashamed not as an emperor, but as private persons are ashamed who submit publicly to church penance, and henceforward there was no day of his life on which he did not lament his error."

When, in the sixth century, the Emperor Justinian, by his despotic wilfulness, produced great disorder in the church, Facundus, bishop of Hermiane, in North Africa, boldly said, "If it pleased God now to raise up an Ambrose, another Theodosius would not be wanting."

A man of similar stamp to Ambrose was his contemporary Martin, the excellent bishop of Tours. The usurper, Maximus, countenanced by unprincipled worthless bishops, had ordered the heretical teacher, Priscillian, to execution. Martin, to whom the emperor had given his word that he would not shed blood, came to Triers, where the imperial court was then held. The boldness of this good man alarmed them. He was told that he ought not to come, unless he brought peace; he answered, "I come with the peace of Christ;" and went into the city. He severely punished the unworthy bishops, and no entreaties, flatterers, or threats could prevail upon him to have communion with them; but when he heard that officers had been sent into Spain, in order to put down the rest of the Priscillians, and that fresh blood was likely to be shed, he hastened by night to the imperial palace, and declared himself ready to make concessions at once if the orders sent to Spain were withdrawn. Thus he saved many innocent lives.

In these conflicts of Christian love the bishops of the seat of the eastern Roman empire, the patriarchs of Constantinople, particularly distinguished themselves. Placed as they were in the vicinity of a court full of corruption, and exposed to the artifices of vicious courtiers and worldly ecclesiastics, they often found themselves in a difficult and dangerous position, when they aimed at faithfully discharging the duties of their office in all its extent. Under such circumstances we see the Christian hero, John Chrysostom, from whom we have already quoted so many beautiful passages, combat all the corruptions of his age, full of the energy of faith and the glow of holy love; and the contrast thus pre-

sented to us, makes more conspicuous the power of the Divine.

He was called to the bishopric of Constantinople through the powerful influence of Eutropius, who might be said to hold the reins of government, and was very much impressed by a sermon of Chrysostom's which he heard at Antioch. At first he stood high in his esteem, but when he frankly told him the truth, protected the unfortunate in contravention of his will, and remonstrated with him on account of his injustice, he fell under his displeasure. In opposition to Chrysostom, the protector of oppressed innocence and of the persecuted, he managed to limit the protective power of the church to those who had taken refuge at her altars. In vain Chrysostom pointed out to him, in private conversations, the reverses of fortune; in vain he warned him not to think himself secure in the possession of power. In vain he besought him not to trust the flatterers who only did homage to his good fortune, and would soon forsake him when that failed him; in vain he pointed out that, however disagreeable the language of truth might be to him, it should be regarded as his true friend. Afterwards, when his fall took place, he reminded the emperor of all this, and made use of what he had said as a warning to those in high stations; but he preached to the deaf.

But in a short time Eutropius had to learn, by bitter experience, the truth of Chrysostom's predictions. At one stroke he was hurled from the summit of power to the greatest wretchedness. Forsaken by all his former friends, persecuted by his unmerciful enemies, threatened by infuriated soldiers, in the year 299 he sought safety for his life in an asylum which he would not have thought of in the times of his prosperity, and there found in the individual whom he had hated on account of his frankness his only protector.

As a great multitude of persons, of all ranks, were drawn together by this extraordinary spectacle, Chrysostom delivered a discourse on the text, "All things are vanity." After making use of the example then presented to them, in order to impress them with the truth of the words, he added: "These words ought to be inscribed on the walls, on your clothes, on the market, on the doors, on the gateways, and, above all, in the conscience of every one of you; we ought

always to meditate upon them, since the deceitfulness of worldly things—mere profession and hypocrisy—have the appearance of truth to the multitude." He endeavoured to inspire his auditory with sympathy for him who had merited his misfortune by such evil conduct. "Do not think," he said, "of the injustice suffered; we are servants of the Crucified, who said, 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do.' How can you afterwards partake," he said, "of the Holy Supper, and utter those words of the Lord's Prayer, 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,' if you long for the punishment of your debtors? Let no one, therefore, give himself up to anger, but rather let us pray a gracious God, that he would grant him still a respite of his life, and rescue him from impending death, that he may try to make reparation for his injustice; and let us unite in beseeching the benevolent emperor, that he would extend his clemency to this man." To protect the unfortunate, Chrysostom afterwards exposed himself to great danger. He was dragged along by the infuriated soldiers, and in reference to this treatment he said to his people, "It is no disgrace to me, for there is no disgrace but sin; and if the whole world hold thee in disgrace, but thou dost not disgrace thyself, thou art not really disgraced."

Chrysostom had afterwards to sustain with the Empress Eudosia conflicts similar to those with Eutropius, when he appealed to her conscience, and vigorously withstood her injustice towards those whom she sacrificed to the machinations of her favourites. He often incurred her displeasure, and often became the object of her vindictive feelings. But her conscience, ill at ease, again prompted her to be reconciled to him; but at last her animosity became unappeasable, and a distinguished prelate, full of worldly desires and passions, Theophilus of Alexandria, whose enmity Chrysostom had roused by the succour he afforded to the persecuted monks, served as the instrument of her vengeance. Zeal for orthodoxy was used as a pretext. Banished to a remote wild region, Chrysostom showed in adversity true Christian magnanimity, founded on faith, love, and humility, —a light that shone more brightly in proportion as attempts were made to obscure it. In harmony with the noble expression he used in reference to the soldiery, that no one could

be really disgraced who did not disgrace himself, he composed a treatise amidst his sufferings, to console his friends who suffered with him, and to show that no one could really injure him who did not injure himself.

CHAPTER V.

THE GENERAL CHRISTIAN CALLING AND DIGNITY.

Although the consciousness of the general Christian priesthood was much obscured by the causes already adverted to, yet it was too closely connected with the essence of Christianity to be entirely suppressed, and reactions of the original sentiment were continually taking place. As we have already had occasion to adduce many expressions of the fathers who opposed the corruptions of their times, and who sought to revive a sense of the dignity and elevation of the Christian calling, and the common duties founded upon it, we would take this subject into special consideration.

"We find," says Augustin, "a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, who discharges the functions of an earthly calling; he wears the purple mantle; he is a magistrate, a proconsul, or an emperor; he is occupied about the concerns of an earthly kingdom, but he has his heart above, if he is a Christian, a believer, a man of piety, if he despises that which he now possesses, and hopes for that which as yet he does not possess. We must, therefore, not despair of the citizens of heaven if we see them transacting earthly business in an earthly state; and on the other hand, we must not congratulate all men as happy whom we see occupied with heavenly concerns, since sometimes the sons of perdition sat in Moses' seat, of whom it is said: 'All whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not.' The former class, amidst earthly concerns, lift up their hearts to heaven; the latter, while uttering the words of heaven, drag down their hearts to earth." Elsewhere he says: "Let every

believer say, 'I am holy.' To speak thus is no proud assumption, but an expression of thankfulness. If thou sayest that thou art holy of thyself, *that* is pride. But if, as a believer in Christ, and as a member of Christ, thou wilt not call thyself holy, thou art unthankful. When the apostle wishes to check pride he does not say, 'Thou hast not,' but 'What hast thou which thou hast not received?' Thou wilt not be censured for saying that thou hast something which thou hast not, but that thou hast of thyself what thou hast. Acknowledge rather that thou really hast, but hast nothing of thyself, in order not to indulge in pride or ingratitude. Say to thy God, 'I am holy, since thou hast made me holy; since thou hast bestowed thy gifts upon me, not because I have merited them;' for if thou art not willing to call thyself so, thou beginnest to offend our Lord Jesus Christ; for if all Christians who believe on him, and have been baptized into him, have put him on, as the apostle says, 'As many of you as have been baptized have put on Christ;' if, therefore, they have become members of his body, and say they are not holy, they offend the Head himself, whose members are, according to them, not holy." And in one of his sermons Augustin says to all Christians: "Learn that it is your business to put out your money to interest. (Matt. xxv.) Ye cannot indeed get interest from the place where we stand, but ye can elsewhere, wherever ye may be. Yet ye get interest whenever you gain over one or another to the Lord. Be as my representatives in your families. A bishop means an overseer, because by his overseeing he takes care of the whole. Every father of a family exercises the office of a bishop for his own house; he watches over the faith of his family, that none of them may be seduced by false doctrine; neither wife, nor son, nor daughter, nor servant, since he has purchased them at a dear price. The apostolic doctrine has placed masters before servants, and subjected servants to their masters; yet Christ paid the price of redemption for both. Despise not any of the least among you; with all watchfulness care for the salvation of the members of your families. If ye do this, ye will put out your money to interest; then ye will not be like the slothful servant, nor have reason to fear his dreadful sentence." And in a sermon on Psa. l. 23, Augustin says to the members of his church: "Govern your houses, your sons, and your

families. As it is our business to address you in the church, so it is yours in your houses to take care that you may be able to give a good account of those who are under your care." Thus also Chrysostom addresses his church, on 2 Thess. v.: "Let every one of you first of all teach himself. As a light, if it burns clearly, can kindle many lights, but if it is extinguished, neither can give light itself, nor kindle other lights, so it is with every holy light. If the light in us burns clearly, we shall form many scholars and teachers. Suppose a pious man who has a wife and children. Tell me, cannot he do more to profit them than I can? For they hear me only once or twice in a month; and what they have heard, perhaps they retain till they have crossed the threshold of the church, and then forget it. But if they see continually before them the life of such a person, they derive great benefit from it. Take your part with me in the service of the church. I speak to all collectively; you should speak to each one, and let every one take on himself to care for the salvation of those who are nearest to him; for that every one should care in these things for his own household, learn from the Apostle Paul. Hear his instructions to wives: 'If they would learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home;' he does not send them to the church-teachers. For as in elementary schools the scholars in their turn become teachers, so it should be in the church. See how many services thy wife renders thee; how she takes care of all household matters. Do in return something for her benefit. How? Take her by the hand in divine things. What thou hearest that is useful carry home in thy mouth, like the swallow, and put it in the mouth of the mother and children." Paulinus, bishop of Nola, writes to a Christian householder: "The Lord himself has said that he will be always present in the communion of two or three; hence I am convinced that he also dwells in the midst of thy house."

CHAPTER VI.

VARIOUS ERRORS IN PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY.

As it is impracticable to give relief to a man who is suffering from bodily disease, if he is insensible of it, and rejects all remedies, so the spiritually diseased—the sinner—cannot be relieved as long as he is unconscious of his spiritual malady, of his sin and guilt; whether he will not acknowledge what is sinful in his heart and life, or attempts to quiet his conscience by seeking excuses for his sins. Augustin justly observes, that "only that man can obtain the forgiveness of sins who says, 'I have sinned.'" Every age has its own peculiar apologies for the evil which it cannot altogether deny. In the age we are now reviewing there were partly apologies of a kind in which we recognize the influence of the earlier heathen stand-point, and partly such as were framed from Christian doctrines, misunderstood and isolated, disjoined from their connection with other truths. The disposition which prompts men to seek for excuses can easily find them everywhere, even in what is true in itself. The ground of apology taken from heathenism was the power of fate, by which human actions are determined; the grounds of apology deduced from a false application of biblical truths were, the irresistible influence of evil spirits, the sinful nature of man in his present condition, and the power of sensuality founded upon it—a point in which what belonged to heathenism, and the misconception of Christian truth, met.

Against such grounds of apology Augustin says:* "Be a judge, not an advocate, of thy sins. Ascend the judgment-seat of thy conscience, and be thy own accuser. I seek for no excuse for sin, whoever has sinned with me or seduced me to sin; I say not—fate has willed it; lastly, I say not—the devil has done it. For the devil himself has indeed power to allure or to terrify, and, if God permit, to assail with sore temptations; but we must pray to the Lord for strength, that

* Peccatum tuum judicem te habeat, non patronum. In tribunal mentis tuæ adscende contra te, et reum constitue te ante te. Noli ponere te post te, ne Deus ponat te ante se.—August. *Serm.* 20, § 2.

his snares may not entangle us. Perverse men," he says, "try to put the guilt of evil upon God, while they ascribe what is good to themselves. If a man has done something good, he says, I have done it; but if he has done something evil, he seeks to lay the fault on another, to avoid confessing his sin to God. He who is not altogether abandoned, has Satan at hand, whom he accuses. 'Satan did it,' he says; 'he seduced me into it,' as if Satan had the power to compel him. He has only the craft to allure. But if Satan spoke, and God were silent, thou mightest excuse thyself. But now thy ear is placed between God commanding and the Tempter alluring. Why is it inclined one way, and why does it turn from the other? Satan ceases not to prompt to evil; but God also ceases not to exhort to good. But Satan forces no one against his will; it stands in thy own power to follow him or not. Then again, many persons accuse not Satan, but their fate. Thus one says, 'My fate has brought me to this.' But sometimes they attack God himself, and say, when they sin, 'God willed it; if God had not willed it, I should not have sinned;' like those persons who are referred to in the Epistle of James (i. 13).

Chrysostom, who had to contend in populous cities against such notions, so detrimental to moral earnestness and zeal, calls the doctrine of fate, and of all-ruling necessity, an invention of the devil, "who," as he beautifully expresses it, "wishes to impair on all sides the liberty granted us by God." "We cannot wonder," he says, "that unbelievers, who bow down before wood and stone, are seized by this malady; but that those who have been set free from this delusion and servitude, who have been privileged to attain to the knowledge of the true God, should allow themselves to be again carried away by such infatuation, is most lamentable; when those who profess to honour Christ, to whom heavenly wisdom has been revealed, voluntarily cast themselves into the abyss, since with extreme irrationality they deprive themselves of that freedom which God gave them, subject themselves to the hardest servitude, and place themselves, by their thoughts, under the worst tyranny, which in reality has no existence, and seek to maim the sinews of zeal for virtue." "If we only will," he says elsewhere, "not only death, but even the devil himself cannot hurt us."

When refuge was not sought in such grounds of apology, there were two others, the effect of errors, that were injurious to progressive holiness; the contemplation of the love of God apart from his holiness, or of his holiness apart from his love; on the one hand, a false dependence on God's love, as inclined to overlook evil, which led to carnal security in sin; and on the other hand, despair in the view of God's holiness, which consumed all moral power, since it was not accompanied by looking off from self and putting confidence in redeeming grace.

Augustin places together these temptations: "By such craft," he says, "Satan seduces souls, and draws them away from being saved by confessing their sins, since he either leads them to seek excuses for their sins, and to make accusations against others, or because they have already sinned to indulge in despair, by imagining that they cannot obtain pardon; or he leads men to be careless about amendment, because God will pardon everything." To the despairing soul who exclaims, "How can I come to God laden with such great sins?" Augustin says: "Do not give yourselves up; do not despair! Ye are men, made in the image of God. He who created you men, himself became man; the blood of the Only-begotten has been shed for you, in order that many sons might attain to the everlasting inheritance of God's children. When you are reduced to nothing on account of your earthly frailty, value yourselves according to the price of your redemption. Estimate according to its worth what ye eat, what ye drink [he here refers to communion with the Lord in the Holy Supper]; and what is confirmed to you by your *Amen* [the words 'for the forgiveness of sins,' used at the celebration of the Lord's Supper]. Do we thus exhort you that ye may be high-minded and pretend to perfection? No; but ye must not think yourselves far from all righteousness. I will not ask you about your righteousness, for perhaps none of you would venture to say, I am just; but I ask you about your faith. As none of you ventures to say I am just, so no one ventures to say, I am not a believer. I do not yet ask how thou livest, but what thou believest. Thou wilt answer, that thou believest in Christ. Hast thou not heard the apostle—'that the just shall live by his faith?' If thou believest, thou wilt guard thyself against sin; if thou guardest thyself,

thou wilt exert thyself. God knows thy strivings; he sees thy willing; he sees thy conflict with the flesh; he exhorts thee to carry on the conflict; he supports thee, that thou mayst conquer; he succours the faint; he crowns the conqueror. Therefore rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous (Psa. xxxiii. 1); for the just lives by his faith. Learn to have in your heart what every man has on his tongue: 'As God wills' (quod Deus vult);—a proverb often contains wholesome doctrine."

Like Augustin, another theologian of this age, the monk Pelagius (whose errors proceeded from a one-sided conception of truth, a one-sided opposition against falsehood), combated that perverse self-apology in the service of sin, and that vain confidence in the abused compassion of God: the false tendency of his opposition consisted in this, that he did not, like Augustin, refer men to the power of God in redemption, but rather to their own moral power, which in all ways he sought to magnify; that he represented Christ more as a teacher, a lawgiver, and the ideal of a holy life, than as the Redeemer, who himself is *for* believers, and *in* them the source of true righteousness and holiness. The people whom Pelagius opposed with honest moral zeal were those who said: "If a man only believes in the Redeemer, he may continue to live in sin—he will notwithstanding be saved by his faith." They did not consider that this faith, where it really exists, is necessarily the basis and germ of a new life, proceeding from self-renunciation and a surrender to the Redeemer,—that faith in the Redeemer and continuance in sin from which man was redeemed, is a contradiction. The Pelagians, who justly combated this delusion, said, on the other hand, "Faith does not alone make man righteous, but good works must be added." But here was their error, that they regarded these works as something added from without, as a fruit independent of faith, and produced by the moral power of man roused into greater activity by the Christian doctrine, instead of representing these good works as the fruit of the divine principle of life contained in genuine faith. Both these opposite errors were combated by Augustin.* "The soul of

* Anceps animus humanus et fluctuans inter confessionem infirmitatis et audaciam præsumptionis, plerumque hinc atque inde contunditur, et

man," he says, "commonly fails, because it fluctuates hither and thither between the two extremes,—the confession of weakness and the presumption of pride, and so fails on the one side or the other. There are those who resign themselves entirely to their weakness, and indulge in the notion that the mercy of God is for all sinners, though they persist in sin, if they only believe that God forgives sins; so that even none that are vicious among believers will perish. Such persons are inclined to trust in the non-punishment of all sin; but for their sinful confidence they are necessarily condemned by that righteous God whose judgment, as well as whose mercy, the Psalmist celebrates. (Psa. ci. 1.) But if any one, shocked by such a thought, rises to a bold self-confidence, trusts in his own righteousness and his own powers, although such an one does everything that appears right in the eyes of men, so that no fault can be found with his life, yet God himself condemns such presumptuous pride." He then contrasts those who believe they can be justified by their works, and those who believed they could be saved by faith while they continued in sin. He compares Paul and James, and adds:* "The apostles by no means contradict one another. Paul commends the faith of Abraham, and James his works. James mentions the well-known act of Abraham, his presenting his son as a sacrifice to God. A great work, but proceeding from faith. I praise the superstructure of works; but I also see the foundation of faith. I praise good works as the fruit; but I recognize the root in faith. If Abraham had had such a faith that when God commanded him to offer his son, he had said to himself, 'I will not do it, and yet I believe that God acquits me, though I despise his commands;' his faith without works would have been dead, and, like a root without fruit, would have remained dried up and withered. A good work becomes such by the disposi-

ita impellitur ut ei in quamlibet partem cadere præcipitium sit.—August. *in Psa.* xxxi. *Enarr.* 2, § 1.

* Jacobus in epistola sua, contra eos qui nolebant bene operari de sola fide præsumentes, ipsius Abrahæ opera commendavit, cujus Paulus fidem; et non sunt sibi adversi apostoli. Dicit autem opus omnibus notum; Abraham filium suum immolandum Deo obtulit. Magnum opus, sed ex fide. Laudo superædificationem operis, sed video fide fundamentum; laudo fructum boni operis; sed in fide agnosco radicem.—August. *in Psa.* xxxi. *Enarr.* § 3.

tion; but faith gives its right direction to the disposition." Against those self-confident persons he says:* "O ye strong ones, who need no physician! Yours is not the strength of health, but the strength of frenzy. For none are stronger than the raving mad; they have greater strength than persons in health; but the greater their strength appears to be, so much nearer death are they." In another passage he says:† "When thou thinkest on thy weakness, thou sinkest down before the requirements of the doctrine of Christ. Strengthen thyself by his example. But that example is too high for thee. He is with thee who has given the example, in order to aid thee." And again, Christ's humility is an offence to the high-minded. But if it pleases thee as a Christian, then imitate him therein. If thou imitatest him, thou wilt find no weariness; for he himself says (Matt. xi. 28.): 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest; learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.' This, then, is the Christian doctrine. No man can do anything good but through the grace of Christ. When he has begun to do good, let him not ascribe it to himself; and if he does not ascribe it to himself, let him thank God, from whom he has received it. But if he does good, let him not exalt himself above him who does it not; for the grace of God is not limited to him so that it cannot reach others. Such is the pride of the human heart, at so great a distance is it from God; and when it withdraws from God, it sinks into the abyss. On the contrary, the humble heart draws God down from heaven, so that he comes very near to it. God is greatly exalted, enthroned above the highest heaven, exalted above all angels. How high must thou raise thyself in order to reach him, the Most High! Do not weary thyself, striving beyond thy measure; I give thee better counsel. Certainly, God is highly exalted; but only humble thyself, and he will lower himself to thee."

* O fortes, quibus medicus opus non est! Fortitudo ista non sanitatis est, sed insaniæ. Nam et phreneticus nihil fortius, valentiores sunt sanis; sed quanto majores vires, tanto mors vicinior.—August. *in Psa.* lviii. *Serm.* 1, § 7.

† Sed considerans infirmitatem tuam, deficis sub præcepto; confortare in exemplo. Sed etiam exemplum ad te multum est; adest ille qui præbuit exemplum, ut præbeat et auxilium.—August. *in Psa.* lvi. § 1.

And Chrysostom says:* "No one can lay any other foundation than that which is laid!" On that let us continue to build, to that let us hold fast as the branch to the vine; let nothing stand between us and Christ, for if anything stands between we are undone; for the branch draws its nourishment from the stock, and the building stands firm because it rests upon the foundation; taken from that, it sinks at once, for it has nothing by which it can support itself. Let us not merely hold fast to Christ, but become altogether one with him. If we are separated from him, we are undone. Let us become one with Him, and become one by our works, 'for whoever keepeth my commands,' he says, 'abideth in me.' By various images he shows us how we must be one with him. He is the head, we are the body. He is the vine, we are the branches. He is the bridegroom, we are the bride. He is the shepherd, we are the sheep. He is the way, we are those that walk therein. We are the temple, he is the indwelling divinity. He is the first-born, we are his brethren. He is the heir, we are the co-heirs. He is the life, we are the living. He is the resurrection, we are the risen. He is the light, we are the enlightened. All these images denote the most intimate union, and leave not the least intervening space; for if we were only a little separated from Him, we should by degrees be further removed;

* Θεμέλιον γὰρ ἄλλον οὐδεὶς δύναται θεῖναι παρὰ τὸν κείμενον. Ἐπὶ τοῦτο οὖν οἰκοδομώμεν, καὶ ὡς θεμελίου ἐχώμεθα, ὡς κλῆμα ἀμπέλου, καὶ μηδὲν ἔστω μέσον ἡμῶν καὶ Χριστοῦ. Ἂν γάρ γένηταί τι μέσον, εὐθέως ἀπολλύμεθα. Καὶ γὰρ τὸ κλῆμα κατὰ τὸ συνεχὲς ἕλκει τὴν πότητα, καὶ ἡ οἰκοδομὴ κατὰ τὸ κεκολλῆσθαι ἕστηκεν· ὡς ἂν διαστῇ, ἀπόλλυται, οὐκ ἔχουσα ποῦ ἐρείσει ἑαυτήν. Μὴ τοίνυν ἁπλῶς ἐχώμεθα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ κολληθῶμεν αὐτῷ. Ἂν γὰρ διασταθῶμεν, ἀπολλύμεθα. Οἱ γὰρ μακρύνοντες ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ σοῦ, ἀπολοῦνται, φησι. Κολλώμεθα τοίνυν αὐτῷ, καὶ κολλώμεθα διὰ τῶν ἔργων. Ὁ γὰρ τηρῶν τὰς ἐντολάς μου, αὐτὸς ἐν ἐμοὶ μένει. Καὶ γὰρ διὰ πολλῶν ἡμᾶς ὑποδειγμάτων ἐνοῖ. Σκόπει δὲ· αὐτὸς ἡ κεφαλή, ἡμεῖς τὸ σῶμα. Μὴ δύναται μέσον τι εἶναι κεφαλῆς καὶ σώματος διάστημα; αὐτὸς θεμέλιος, ἡμεῖς οἰκοδομή· αὐτὸς ἄμπελος, ἡμεῖς κλήματα· αὐτὸς ὁ νυμφίος, ἡμεῖς ἡ νύμφη· αὐτὸς ὁ ποίμην, ἡμεῖς τὰ πρόβατα· οὗς ἐκεῖνος, ἡμεῖς οἱ βαδίζοντες· ναὸς πάλιν ἡμεῖς, αὐτὸς ἔνοικος· αὐτὸς ὁ πρωτότοκος, ἡμεῖς οἱ ἀδελφοί· αὐτὸς ὁ κληρονόμος, ἡμεῖς οἱ συγκληρονομοι· αὐτὸς ἡ ζωή, ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες· αὐτὸς ἡ ἀνάστασις, ἡμεῖς οἱ ἀνιστάμενοι· αὐτὸς τὸ φῶς, ἡμεῖς οἱ φωτιζόμενοι. Ταῦτα πάντα ἕνωσιν ἐμφαίνει, καὶ οὐδὲν μέσον κενὸν ἀφίησιν εἶναι, οὐδὲ τὸ μικρότατον.—Chrysost. *in* 1 *Cor. Hom.* 8, § 4.

as the twig, if it be only partially separated from the root, it immediately withers."

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians, who sought again for justification by outward performances, "Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" he marked the stand-point to which their Christian life had sunk back—the reducing of religion to external works, and things which were substituted for the rational service of God, embracing the whole life of the redeemed; and this outward tendency formed one of the greatest obstacles to the progress of real Christianity. What was in itself a proper expression of Christian disposition and feeling, lost its true import, and became injurious to the Christian life, when it was contemplated apart from its connection with this disposition, and a meritoriousness was attributed to it in and for itself. Thus, for example, alms-giving was practised in the confidence that by means of it men could purchase indemnity for their sins, or gifts were made to the church, under the notion that mere outward church-going pilgrimages to holy places at Jerusalem, or the mechanical repetition of the sign of the cross, &c. were meritorious. Those teachers of the church who were animated with Christian zeal, were hence necessitated to combat this overvaluation of externals, and to direct men's minds from the outward to the inward.

Augustin says:* "To give alms is of advantage to those who have changed their lives. But if thou givest something, in order to be permitted to sin unpunished, thou dost not feed Christ in the persons of the poor, but thou seekest to bribe thy judge." Elsewhere he says, "When a man has heard that the Lord has said, 'Offer to God thanksgiving' (Psa. l. 14), he thinks and says to himself, I will rise early every day, go to church, sing a hymn morning and evening, and a third or fourth in my house; I will daily bring God the offering of my praise. Thou dost well indeed if thou dost this; but take care that thou dost not thereby become more secure because thou dost this, lest while thy tongue praises God thy life blasphemes Him." We love the habitation of

* Eleemosynæ iliis prosunt, qui vitam mutaverunt. . . . . Nam si ideo das, ut liceat tibi semper impune peccare, non Christum pascis, sed judicem corrumpere conaris.—August. *Serm.* 39, § 6.

God's house and the place where his honour dwelleth (Psa. xxvi. 8), if we are it ourselves. Whoever loves the habitation of God's house doubtless loves the church,—the church which does not consist in walls and roofs, adorned by art, not in the splendour of marble and of gilded tables, but in believing, holy men, who love God with all their hearts, and their neighbours as themselves."

Jerome thus writes to a person who sought his advice for the right conduct of a Christian life. "The true temple of Christ is the souls of believers; adorn these,—clothe these, —bring them as offerings,—in them receive Christ. Of what use is it that the walls of the churches are resplendent with jewels, while Christ suffers hunger in the persons of the poor?" In the same epistle, he writes against an over-valuation of pilgrimages. "When heaven and earth pass away, certainly all earthly things will pass away. The sites of the crucifixion and the resurrection profit those who take up their cross and rise with Christ daily, and thus show that they are worthy to dwell in such a place. Finally, let those who exclaim, 'the temple of the Lord,' listen to the apostle: 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' From Jerusalem and from Britain the kingdom of heaven is equally open to you, for the kingdom of God is within you."

Gregory of Nyssa, when he had returned from a journey to Jerusalem, thus writes: "Before I visited that spot, and since I have professed my faith in Christ as the true God, my faith has neither been increased nor diminished. I believed that the Son of God was born of a virgin before I saw Bethlehem. I believed in the resurrection of Christ before I saw his sepulchre. I confessed the reality of the Ascension without having seen the Mount of Olives. I have only gained thus much from that journey, to know, from actual comparison, that there is far more holiness near us than in foreign places. Hence I call on you who fear the Lord, to praise him in whatever place ye may happen to be. For no one comes nearer to God by a mere change of place. Wherever thou art God will come to thee, if the habitation of thy soul is so prepared that the Lord can dwell in thee and walk in thee. But if in the inner man thou art full of evil thoughts, thou mayest be on Golgotha or the mount of Olives, yet thou art

as far from having received Christ into thy soul, as those who have not yet made a profession of the Christian faith. If the Spirit blows where he wills, then believers here become partakers of the work of grace according to their faith, not in consequence of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem."

Thus Augustin endeavoured to turn the thoughts of men from anxiety after the bodily view of the Redeemer, to spiritual communion with him. "We must hear the gospel in such a state of mind, as if we actually heard the voice of the Redeemer, and we must not say, 'Blessed were they who could see him!' for many among those who saw him, joined in crucifying him. But many among us who never saw him, have believed on him. The Lord is on high, but the Lord is also here with his truth."

Though in the great cities of the Grecian empire many sought to find a religious pretext for the splendour of their dress, and thus fancied they could combine the claims of vanity and of religion, yet Asterius, of Amasea in Pontus, remarked in a sermon: "Those among rich men and women who wish to be pious have chosen the evangelical history itself and given it to the weavers; I mean our Lord Jesus Christ, with all of his disciples, and every one of his miracles as it is narrated. There thou wilt see the marriage at Cana and the water-pots of stone, the paralytic who carried his bed on his shoulders, the blind man restored to sight with clay, the woman with the bloody issue who was cured by touching the hem of Christ's garment, the penitent sinner who fell at his feet, and Lazarus whom he raised from the dead. And when they have done this, they think they are pious and wear a dress acceptable to God. If they would take my counsel, they would part with these clothes, and hold in honour the living images of God. Do not have pictures of Christ on thy garments, but bear his spiritual image in thy soul. Do not have the paralytic painted on thy walls, but find out the sick that are lying on the ground. Do not always have before thy eyes the woman who was cured of the bloody issue, but give relief to suffering widows. Gaze not continually on the penitent woman falling at the Lord's feet, but feel contrition on account of thy own sins."

Against the mechanical use of the sign of the cross,

Augustin says: "Many make the sign of the cross, and are not disposed to understand its meaning. God desires a person who will bring this sign into the life, not one who merely describes it with his finger. If thou bearest on thy forehead the mark of Christ's humility, then bear in thy heart the imitation of Christ's humility." When Augustin missed many of his usual hearers in his church, who had resorted to the public games at the circus, preferring noisy amusements to devotion, he said of them: "If they are alarmed by anything at the circus, they make at once the sign of the cross, and yet they would not stand there if they bore in their hearts what they carry on their foreheads."

Vigilantius attacked, with passionate zeal for the honour of God, that outward direction of the religious spirit which bordered on heathenism; but he was so far carried away by his feelings, as not to observe a tender consideration for the religious sentiment which was at the basis of the error; and without such forbearance no attempt at reformation can succeed. The man whose superstitious feeling is justly opposed, feels himself injured in that which in his mind is associated with the sacred feelings of devotion. That which is despised, as something merely outward and belonging to the senses, becomes partly internal by its relation to his religious feelings; the point to be considered is not what this outward thing is in and for itself, but what it has become by the admixture of religious feeling. Vigilantius justly combated the reverence, bordering on heathenism, which was shown to the relics of men who in their life-time were witnesses of the truth and organs of the Holy Spirit. He justly opposed to this the true nature of religious worship. But he forgot the feeling of love and piety, the due respect and consideration for the memory of the men of God, when he ridiculed persons for adorning ashes and bones with gold and silver, or wrapping them up in costly clothes. Jerome could here justly object to him that the devotion of believers saw something more than this in it; that there was something higher in the feeling; that to believers there was nothing dead, but that they were raised in spirit by the sight of these relics to the saints who were living with God; that God was not the God of the dead but of the living. Yet even this remark could not take from Vigilantius his right to combat superstitious

devotion. Superstition could not be approved of merely because there was something Christian lying at its basis, nor was it on that account less dangerous. A certain religious feeling is originally at the basis of all idolatry, which only wanders from its proper object and attaches itself to sensible appearances. Zeal for the truth and for the honour of God cannot be without forbearing, recognising love, neither can love exist without holy zeal for the truth.

CHAPTER VII.

ON PRAYER.

"PRAYER," says Ambrose, "is the nourishment of the soul; by it the seat of vice is transformed into a sanctuary of virtue." "The aim of prayer itself," says Augustin, "ennobles and purifies the heart, and makes it receptive of the divine gifts which are imparted by the Spirit. God, indeed, is always ready to impart his spiritual illumination to us, but we are not always capable of receiving it, when we incline to other things and are darkened by desires after worldly objects.* In prayer the heart is turned towards him who is always ready to give if we only receive what he gives; and in this very act of turning there is a purging of the inward eye when temporal objects of desire are excluded, so that the vision of a simple heart is rendered able to receive the simple light." The prayer of the Christian must not exist as an isolated thing, as an act dissevered from the rest of life and self-enclosed; it must proceed from the innermost ground of the whole Christian life, be its animating principle, and react upon it with sanctifying power. "Thou must pray without ceasing," says Basil, "not in words,

* Fit ergo in oratione conversio cordis ad eum, qui semper dare paratus est, si nos capiamus quod dederit; et in ipsa conversione purgatio interioris oculi, cum excluduntur ea quæ temporaliter cupiebantur, ut acies cordis simplicis ferre possit simplicem lucem.—August. *de Sermone Domni in Monte* 2, § 14.

but since thou connectest thyself with God through the whole course of life, thy whole life must be one continued prayer." And Augustin says: "Ye notice how the children of God frequently pray to him with sighs, and ye inquire after the cause of the sighing. Men hear the sighing and know not its cause, if, indeed, the sighing reaches the ears of a bystander. For there is a secret sighing of which no human being is cognizant. Yet if a special anxiety has so seized the heart of a man that he expresses in a loud voice the sufferings of the inner man, the cause is inquired into, and the bystanders say, 'Perhaps he sighs on this or that account.' Who can understand it except that Being before whose eyes and ears he sighs? Wherefore it is said in Psa. xxxviii. 9, 'I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.' For men commonly hear only the sighing of the flesh; but they do not hear him who sighs out of the depths of his heart. A man has been deprived of his property; he laments, but not with the sighing of his heart. Another because he has lost a son, or another because he has lost a wife; a third because his vines have been destroyed by hail-storms, or his wine has turned sour, or he has been robbed of his cattle, or because he dreads his enemy: all these lament, but it is the sighing of the flesh. On the other hand, the child of God who sighs as he meditates on the Sabbath of the kingdom of God, which flesh and blood cannot inherit, says: 'I roar for the disquietude of my heart.' And the holy Psalmist adds: 'Lord, all my desire is *before thee;*' not before men who cannot see into the heart. Let thy desires be before Him, and the Father who seeth in secret will grant what thou desirest; for the desire itself is thy prayers, and if thy desires do not abate, thy prayer is without ceasing; for not in vain the Apostle says (1 Thess. v. 17): 'Pray without ceasing.' Do we bow the knee incessantly; do we prostrate ourselves before him incessantly, or do we incessantly raise our hands to him so that he can say: 'Ye pray without ceasing?' But if we so understand prayer, we cannot do it without ceasing. But there is another internal praying without ceasing, which consists in the desires. Whatever else thou mayest do, if thou longest after that Sabbath, thou prayest without ceasing. Thou wilt be silent when thou ceasest to love. The waxing cold of love is the silence of the heart;

the flame of love is the call of the heart to God. And, 'I will praise the Lord at all times.' See, my brethren, the sermon is a little longer than usual, and you are exhausted.* Who, then, can hold out to praise God at all times? I will show thee the method of praising God at all times, if thou wilt. What thou doest, do rightly, and thou praisest God. If thou singest a spiritual song, thou praisest God; what does thy tongue do, if thy heart also does not praise God?" It was customary to sing the forty-second Psalm at the baptism of catechumens after they had been duly instructed. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!" And Augustin explains the words in this mode of applying them, to mean, "that they cry after the fountain of the forgiveness of sins as the hart pants after the fountain of fresh water. But he adds: "Yet, my brethren, even at baptism this longing of believers does not appear to be satisfied, but probably when they know where they are travellers, and whither they are going, their feelings will become still more ardent." Hence, he says: "Oh! if we felt it even in sighs what strangers we are here; if we did not love the world, but continually with pious hearts knocked at the gate of Him who has called us. Desire is the lip of the heart; we shall receive if we expand our desires to the utmost of our power. To effect this is the design of the Holy Scriptures, of public worship, and of the sacraments. The design of singing of God's praises and of our preaching itself is not merely that desire may be sown and spring up, but that it may increase to such a degree that it may receive what the eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive." But this father, who was so profoundly acquainted with the human heart, was also aware of many disturbing influences which in a world full of

* Ecce modo paulo longior sermo factus est fatigamini. Tota die Deum laudare quis durat? Suggero remedium, unde tota dies laudes Deum, si vis. Quidquid egeris, bene age, et laudasti Deum. Quando cantas hymnum, laudas Deum; lingua tua quid agit, nisi laudet et conscientia tua? Cessasti ab hymno cantando, discedis ut reficiaris; noli inebriari, et laudasti Deum. Discedis ut dormias; noli surgere ad malefaciendum, et laudasti Deum. Negotium agis; noli fraudem facere, et laudasti Deum. Agrum colis; noli litem movere, et laudasti Deum. In innocentia operum tuorum præpara te ad laudandum Deum tota die.—August. *in Psa.* xxxiv. *Serm.* 2, § 16.

temptations threatened to quench the fire of first love; and in this conviction, he says: "As long as we are here below, we must pray to God that he would not let our zeal in prayer and his mercy depart from us; that is, that we may pray continually, and that he may always have compassion upon us, for many become negligent in prayer; in the novelty of conversion they pray with ardour, but afterwards become negligent, cold, and indifferent. The adversary is awake; thou art asleep. Let us then not relax in prayer. Although he delays what he designs to bestow, yet he will not refuse us. His promise is certain; let us not relax in prayer; but even that we do not relax in prayer is owing to his grace. As long as the spirit of prayer has not departed from thee, be assured that the mercy of God has not forsaken thee."

Augustin remarks how the awakening man out of his slumbers and disclosing what is in his heart, must impel him to prayer through self-knowledge and a consciousness of his real wants. "Every temptation," he says,* "is a trial; and every trial brings its fruit. Since man, for the most part, is unacquainted with himself, he knows not what he can bear and what he cannot; sometimes he is confident that he can bear what he cannot, and sometimes he despairs of bearing what he can bear: thus temptation comes as an inquiry, and man discovers himself; for he was hidden from himself, though not from his Creator. Thus Peter was confident that he had what he did not really possess. (Luke xxii. 33.) He knew not his own strength; but the Lord knew it. He did not give the right answer; but the Creator, who was willing to give the strength necessary for his creature, knew what he had not yet given him, though Peter, who had not yet received, knew not his own deficiency: the temptation came; he denied his Lord, he wept, he received strength."

On distraction in prayer and the long-suffering of God,

* Omnis enim tentatio probatio est, et omnis probationis effectus habet fructum suum. Quia homo plerumque etiam sibi ipsi ignotus est, quid ferat, quidve non ferat, ignorat; et aliquando præsumit se posse ferre quod non potest, et aliquando desperat se posse ferre quod potest; accedit tentatio quasi interrogatio, et invenitur homo a se ipso, quia latebat et se ipsum, sed artificem non latebat.—August. *in Psa.* lv. § 2.

which he shows towards those who pray to him, Augustin thus writes (Psa. lxxxvi. 5): "'For thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.' What is meant by being good and ready to forgive? Thou bearest with me till thou hast brought me to perfection. For truly, my brethren, I will speak as a man among men; let every one ask his own heart, and consider himself without flattery; for nothing is more foolish than for a man to flatter and mislead himself. Let him see, then, what passes in the human heart; how prayer itself is often hindered by vain thoughts, so that the heart scarcely stands still before its God; how it must manage itself in order to stand firm, and can, as it were, find no limits, no bar in order to restrain its unsteady movements, and to make it quiet, that it may be blessed by its God. When, therefore, it is said here, 'Rejoice the soul of thy servant; for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul; for thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive;' I think that God is here said to be good and ready to forgive, because he bears with us as we are, and still waits for our prayers in order to assist us further. For what man would endure it, if when he wished to answer his friend who had begun to converse with him, the latter should turn away, and say something else to another person? Or would thy judge have patience if, after he had admitted thee to an audience with him, thou wert all at once to turn away and begin to talk with thy friend? And yet God bears with so many hearts of those who pray to him whose thoughts are turned to different objects, sometimes even perverse and hostile to God. Even to think on other things is an insult to him with whom thou hast begun to converse. Thy prayer is a speaking with God. When thou readest the Holy Scriptures, God speaks to thee; when thou prayest, thou speakest to God."* Thus also Basil exhorts Christians not to despair on account of their unworthiness, but to trust in the mercy of God under all circumstances, with prayer. "As concern for a man's own salvation is a good thing, so on the other hand depression of spirits, despair, giving up the hope of salvation, is injurious to the soul. Hope, therefore, in the goodness of God, and expect his help; and be assured that if we turn to

* Oratio tua locutio est ad Deum. Quando legis, Deus tibi loquitur; quando oras, Deo loqueris.—August. *in Psa.* lxxxv. § 7.

him in the right way, he will not only not reject us, but even while we are uttering the words of prayer, he will say, 'Behold, here am I!'"

Chrysostom says of prayer: "There is nothing more powerful than prayer, nothing that can be compared to it. The emperor adorned with the purple is not so splendid an object as the man of prayer who attains to the honour of intercourse with God. For just as when a person converses with the emperor himself, in the presence of all his nobles, the eyes of all are turned towards him, and he is held in special honour by them—so it is with the man of prayer. For only think what a great thing it is that thou, as a mere man, darest speak freely, in the presence of all the powers of the spiritual world, with God, the king of all those powers! What other honour can be compared to this? And not mere honour, but the greatest advantage, will also accrue to us from prayer, even before we receive what we pray for. For as soon as a man has only raised his hands to heaven, and called on God, he is at once taken away from the crowd of all human things, and is borne into the future life; from that moment he thinks only of heavenly things: in the act of prayer he has nothing in common with the present life, if he prays in earnest. Yes, even if anger is kindled, it is easily pacified; if eager desire inflames him, it is extinguished; if envy tortures him, it is easily expelled. If we only pray in earnest with a watchful soul and sober spirit, even the devil himself, if he is there, is forced to give way. Prayer is the haven for those who are driven hither and thither by the storm, the treasure of the poor, the security of the rich, the cure of disease, the preserver of health. Prayer retains the good we possess immoveably, and quickly changes evil into good." The same father says: "It is impossible for him to sin who prays with real fervour, and always calls upon God. And wherefore? He who warms his soul raises himself to heaven, and thus calls on his Lord; thinks of his sins, for the forgiveness of which he prays to him, and implores his grace, and, occupied with such thoughts, lays aside all earthly cares; such a man is furnished with wings, soars above human passions, and if after prayer he sees an enemy, he no longer regards him as an enemy. But we as men are liable to sink into indolence; and hence it comes to pass that when one,

two, or three hours have flown after prayer, thou wilt be sensible that thy ardour is gradually cooling; then quickly take refuge again in prayer, and warm thy chilled heart. And if thou dost this through the day, warming all the intervals by prayer, thou wilt keep the devil from getting an entrance into thy thoughts. And what we are wont to do at breakfast, and when we wish to drink—when we see that the water that has been warmed becomes cold, we set it afresh on the fire, that it may be quickly warmed again; this let us do here, continually warming our souls afresh by prayer. And let us imitate architects; for they are wont, when they use bricks for a building, to support the building by long wooden beams placed between, on account of the weakness of the materials; and they do this not at long but short intervals, in order thereby to make the junction of the bricks so much the firmer. Thus do thou act; and if thou lettest repeated prayer come between all thy worldly concerns, thou shalt fortify thy life on all sides. If thou so actest, and a thousand storms should blow, temptations, anxieties, burdensome thoughts, press on thee, and what would otherwise fill thee with alarm, nothing will be able to throw down the building which is thus held together by frequent prayer. And thou askest, How it is possible that a man of business, or one who is occupied in the courts of law, can pray three hours a day, and go to church? Yes, this *is* possible, and very easy; for if thou canst not go into the church, yet thou canst stand before the door, and pray even when nailed to the court of justice. For it does not require the voice so much as the disposition, not the outstretching of the hands, but of the self-collected soul, not the outward posture of devotion, but the inward direction of the thoughts. For even Hannah (1 Sam. ii.) was not heard when she spoke aloud, but when she called earnestly upon God in her heart. And this has often been the case with many others. When an earthly potentate rages and threatens in his palace, thus those pray who stand without, uttering only a few words in their hearts, and then they enter in, and are able to transform his rage into gentleness. Neither place, nor time, nor silence, can hinder such a prayer. Let us not then make use of such an excuse, that there is no house of prayer at hand; for if we are soberminded, the grace of the Spirit will make our ownselves into a temple of God.

Hence we have everything easy on all sides; for our worship is not such as it was formerly among the Jews, which required much that belonged to the senses, and many outward rites. Under the old economy, worshippers had to go up to the temple, purchase beasts for sacrifice, stand before the altar, and fulfil many other injunctions; but here nothing of the kind exists, but wherever thou art, thou hast an altar with thee; thou art thyself priest, altar, and sacrifice; wherever thou art, thou canst erect an altar; if only the direction of thy heart is correct, time and place hinder not. And if thou canst not bend the knee, nor smite on thy breast, nor raise thy hands to heaven to heaven, but only show a soul warm with devotion, thou hast accomplished everything that belongs to prayer. The wife, as she sits at her spindle, can look with her soul to heaven, and call on God with ardour; a man who is occupied in the market can pray fervently; another, who sits in the workshop, and sews skins together, can lift up his soul to the Lord; the domestic, as he makes purchases, as he goes to and fro, or as he stands in the kitchen, and it is not in his power to go to church, may pray fervently and earnestly. God is not ashamed of the place; the only thing he requires is the warm heart, the upright soul. And that thou mayest know that no particular posture of body is required, that time and place signify nothing, but only a rightly-awakened mind, take the Apostle Paul for an example. He did not stand upright when he was in the prison, for his feet were made fast in the stocks; and yet as he lay there, he prayed so fervently, that he shook the walls of the prison, made a prisoner of the jailor, and then brought him to holy baptism. And not only do we see this in the instances of great and holy men, but even the thief who stood in no house of prayer, nor could bend his knee, but was stretched on the cross, won with a few words the kingdom of heaven." Chrysostom also says of grace at meals: "The meal which begins and closes with prayer will never suffer want, but is richer than other sources to bring us all good; for it is striking that our domestics, when we give them anything from our table, go away expressing their thanks; but we, who enjoy so much good, never give God this honour, though we should obtain great security thereby; for where prayer and thanksgiving are, thither comes the grace of the Holy Spirit, and all

the power of evil must be weakened. But whoever would apply himself to prayer must not venture to say anything unseemly during the meal; and if he has spoken anything of the kind, let him quickly repent of it." In another passage he says: "A man who is accustomed to converse with God is like an angel; thus the soul is freed from the fetters of the body; thus the spirit soars to heaven, and approaches the throne of God. And the supplicant may be poor, in bondage, ignorant, uncultivated; for God looks not at the beauty of the language, but at the beauty of the soul. If the soul has uttered what is well-pleasing to God, all is accomplished. Seest thou what an easy thing it is! Whoever would make application to one of his fellow-men must know how to speak well, must flatter, and use many contrivances in reference to all the persons who are about a man of rank, in order to meet with a good reception. But here nothing of all this is necessary; nothing is required but a right state of mind, and there is then no hindrance to thy being in God's presence. 'For am I not a God at hand,' saith the Lord, 'and not a God afar off?' (Jer. xxiii. 23.) Therefore it is owing to our fault if he is far from us; for he himself is always near us. And as to what I have said, that we need no eloquence, we often need not even use the voice at all; for if thou only speakest in thy heart, and callest upon him in a right manner, he will readily hearken to thee. There is no servant in waiting to deny thee an entrance; there is no one to say, Now thou canst not be admitted—thou must come later; but when thou comest, He is there to hear thee, whether at breakfast time or at dinner, or late at night; whether in the market or on the road, or in the bedchamber. And when thou standest before the magistrate in judgment, and makest thy appeal, nothing hinders that He should not hear thy prayer, if thou callest upon him in a right manner. Thou canst not say, I am afraid to plead before him, and to petition him; this hindrance does not exist, for he hearkens to no enemy; thou canst always have access to him; thou needest no one to introduce thee; but when thou appliest to him by thyself alone, then he hears thee most readily—when thou seekest no other mediation. We cannot move him so much when we approach to him through another as when we come by ourselves. For since he desires our friendship, and does everything, that we may have confidence in him, he

then hears us most of all when he sees that we do this by ourselves. Thus he acted towards the Canaanitish woman. When Peter and James applied for her, Christ did not regard the request; but when she persisted in her entreaties, immediately he granted her request. And if he seemed a little to set her aside, yet he did it not to drive the woman away, but to honour her still more, and to excite her to greater importunity. Herein we must also exercise ourselves, in order to prevail with God. Let us learn in what manner this should be done. We need employ no money, no particular time, nor frequent any school, in order to learn this art; it requires only the willing mind, and everything belonging to this art is complete. And thou canst speak at this tribunal not for thyself alone, but for many others. And what is here the business of the advocate? All depends on the right kind of prayer—to draw nigh with a sober spirit, with a contrite heart, and with tears; to make request for spiritual things; not to pray against enemies; to bear no grudge against any one; and to banish from the heart all those passions which keep down the soul."

The fathers always combated the earthly disposition of those persons who regarded prayer, by which their souls ought to be raised to the true life in God, only as a means for obtaining from God the satisfaction of their earthly wants, who by this their carnal disposition excluded themselves from the true blessing of prayer: they always taught that the true Christian must seek God in prayer after the example of Christ (as Ambrose says, whoever seeks God, ascends with Christ into the Mount), that he must express in prayer before God his thirst after wisdom and righteousness; yet they were aware that Christianity does not despotically repress the natural feelings of the spiritually-minded man, but with the gentle force of filial love subordinates them to the will of his Heavenly Father and to the higher necessities of the spirit allied to God and renewed after his image. They exhorted Christians, even in temporal distress, to apply to the fountain of all help and of all consolation; only with this disposition, that in every case they should subordinate their will to the divine, and leave to the disposal of eternal wisdom and paternal love whatever might conduce most to their salvation. "Even the body of the good Christian," says Augustin,

"seeks in this world only God's help; for God gives the soul *its* bread which is the word of truth, and he gives the body what is necessary for it, since he created both soul and body."

When Christian physicians could find in their medical skill no aid for a sick person, they used to direct the anxious relatives to God. "When the physician," says Augustin, "turns in despair to those who stand in the house weeping and anxiously expect to hear from his lips the decisive opinion respecting the patient whose recovery seems doubtful, he stands debating with himself—he sees not how he can promise any amendment, he fears to tell the worst, and in order not to create alarm, he at last prudently says, 'The good God can do all things—pray for him.'"

In such cases pious ecclesiastics and laymen assembled round the sick-bed; they exhorted the sick man to be resigned to the will of his Heavenly Father, and prayed for him and with him. Augustin tells us of a remarkable example of the effects of prayer in such a case, as an eye-witness and a truth-loving man who abhorred a fabrication of any kind, even for a good object, as a sin. A person holding a civil office at Carthage, Innocent, was suffering severely from fistula. He had undergone successfully several painful and dangerous operations, and believed that he was cured, when it was discovered that a sinuous ulcer was formed, which baffled surgical skill. At last he was told that he could expect no relief, unless he underwent a fresh operation. This information reduced himself and his family to despair. On the evening before the day appointed for the operation, the clergy as usual came to see him. He besought them with tears to be present with him on the morrow, when he expected no less than to die under the surgeon's hands. The clergy promised him no miracle for his deliverance; but they exhorted him to trust in God, and manfully to bear God's will, whatever it might be. When the clergy knelt down to pray, Innocent also, as if seized by a higher power, threw himself down on the ground, and prayed with such a flood of tears and with such fervour, that Augustin says, "It could not be described in words. I could not pray; I only said the words in my heart, 'Lord, what prayer of thy servants wilt thou hear, if thou dost not hear this?'" The following morning all parties

were in a state of anxious suspense. After the clergy had said a few words of encouragement to the sick man, the surgeons prepared to perform the operation; but how were they astonished when they found that there was nothing to operate upon. "I cannot venture to express in words," says Augustin, "the thanksgiving and overflowing gratitude to the merciful and almighty God which was poured forth from the lips of all, accompanied with tears of joy."

Nor can we reject all that is told of the cures wrought at the graves of the martyrs, at their shrines, or with their relics, in this age—only we must deduce these great effects simply from the believing devotion to which the grace of the Lord condescended; even as Christ acknowledged, in the erroneous notion of the afflicted woman who believed in a divine virtue issuing from his garment—the existing of faith lying at the basis, and therefore did not refuse to answer her petition. Outward circumstances had no other influence, excepting that they contributed to excite this believing piety in the heart. But it was a carnal mind which extolled and sought out such works of faith as the greatest, and forgot the genuine heavenly fruits of love, without which, though a man has faith that can remove mountains, he is nothing. The same remark applies to many appearances in all ages, of which a correct judgment cannot be formed either from the stand-point of a superstition that cleaves only to the senses, or from that of an unbelief totally unacquainted with the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and of the internal spiritual world.

The sick were directed to pray only in connection with medical aid. The church always condemned the fanaticism and unbelief of those who, besides seeking help of God in prayer, and the common means of human art, sought help also in supernatural powers, of which heathen magic boasted, in various manipulations, enchantments, and amulets. "Let us," said Augustin to his congregation, "bear the chastisement of our Heavenly Father. Let us not, if we have the headache, run to enchantments and other vain methods of relief. My brethren, must I mourn over you? Daily I experience such things, and what can I do? Cannot I convince Christians that they must place their hopes in Christ alone?"

There was an unchristian mysticism which opposed prayer

and exertion, such as we find in the Syrian sect of the Euchites* (or Messalians). Man, they said, can do and effect nothing, but must only let God work in him. It is true that the Christian must let God work within him; but this does not exclude the proper activity of man, only this activity must be animated and guided by the Holy Spirit, and to render it such, prayer must henceforth serve as the consecration of the Christian life. The Spirit of God is a spirit of power that makes those who resign themselves to him, with denial of their own will, to be his powerful, efficacious instruments, as he wishes them to be. From a life in God necessarily proceeds an activity in and from God. But that vain notion of the Euchites, of a rest exclusive of all activity, under the pretence of complete resignation to God (not the living God, but an idol, which men have made by the play of their morbid feelings and imaginings), proceeded either from a self-will which, through carnal sloth, shunned exertions that were not pleasing to the flesh, and would not bear the cross after the Redeemer, — or from a pride which would not, confiding in the Lord, employ the means of his appointment, but would rather tempt him to work miracles. The Christian, whose whole life ought to rest in communion with his Saviour, and proceed from it, dare not say, "When does God begin to work, and when does man cease?" But he knows, that as the branch, separated from the living sap of the vine, withers, so, independently of his God, he can neither be nor do anything;—that all that is human in him must be animated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Hence, Augustin says, against those who so misunderstood the doctrine of divine grace as the source of all good, that they excluded all human activity: "I would that those persons may not deceive themselves who say, Why should they preach to us, and enjoin us to depart from evil and do good, when we do not do it, but God works in us to will and to do? Should they not rather, if they are the children of God, acknowledge that they are led by the Spirit of God to do that which they ought to do, and when they have done it, thank Him by whom they were led; for they were led to

* See Neander's General History, vol. iii. p. 341. Standard Library dition.—Tr.

do, not to do nothing."* And Chrysostom says: "Paul grounds the confidence of man on the certainty of the promises of God, since he says (2 Thess. iii. 3), 'But the Lord is faithful who shall stablish you and keep you from evil;' that is, if he has called you to salvation, he will certainly grant it to you; but on the conditions on which he has promised it to you. But on what conditions has he promised it? If we are willing, and follow Him, not unconditionally, not so that we are as inactive as wood or stone. Justly, therefore, he says to them, 'We have confidence in the Lord touching you;' that is, we depend on his grace, by which he again humbles them, and refers everything back to God.'"

Prayer, therefore, ought not to cherish sloth in human action and labour, but impart to all human action a divine power and consecration. Ambrose on Luke vi. 12, says: "Here is an example given which thou oughtest to follow; for what must thou do for thy salvation, seeing that Christ passed all night in prayer for thee? What must thou do, when thou wishest to begin a good work, since Christ, when he designed to send out his apostles, first of all prayed?" "What is more blessed," says Basil, "than to imitate on earth the choir of angels; at the break of day to apply ourselves to prayer, to extol the Creator with praise and thanksgiving; when the sun is fully risen, to go forth to labour, so that prayer accompanies it everywhere, in order to season labour with God's praises as with salt; for the refreshment produced by praising God gives joy to the soul, and drives away sadness." Prayer ought to give the consecration to the whole day. "Knowest thou not, O man," says Ambrose, "that thou owest to God every day the first-fruits of thy heart and of thy tongue?"†

Both Chrysostom and Augustin expressed themselves strongly against the false notion, that prayer offered in certain places was more acceptable to God. They asserted that man was near to God, or at a distance from him, according to the direction of his disposition; that in every place, provided the heart was turned from the world, man could equally approach to God. "A Christian should be careful, not about

* Aguntur enim *ut agant*, non *ut ipsi nihil agant*.

† An nescis, O homo, quod primitias tui cordis ac vocis quotidie Deo debeas?—Ambros. *in Psa.* cxviii. *Serm.* 19, § 22.

the place of prayer," says Chrysostom,* "but about the right kind of prayer." And Augustin says, "If those persons are unfortunate, who are afraid that when they return home they shall be disturbed by the vexation which the members of their household will give them, how much more unfortunate are those who cannot commune with their own hearts, lest their conscience should be disturbed by the sins that intrude upon them? Purify thy heart, that thou mayest be glad to commune with it. Put away the foulness of lust—free it from the contagion of ambition—the hectic fever of superstition—from unholy and evil thoughts, and hatred—I do not say only towards thy friend, but thy enemy. Get rid of all these things; then enter into thy heart and thou wilt have joy. The purity of thy heart itself will give delight and excite thee to prayer. Thus, when thou comest into a lonely place, and stillness and quiet are there, it is a pure place, and thou sayest, 'Let us pray here;' the quiet in this place pleases thee, and thou believest that there God listens to thee. If, therefore, the quiet in the visible place pleases, why art thou not displeased with the impurity of thy heart? Enter within, purify all things, lift up thy eyes to God and he will hear thee." By what Augustin here says of purity of heart as a preparative for praying aright, he by no means intends to assert that man while on earth can attain to that perfect unalloyed purity of heart, and to that untroubled perpetual peace, which will constitute the blessedness of the life everlasting. He well knew, as he himself, a faithful examiner and inspector of the depths of the heart, experienced even to old age, that man below has continually to combat, striving after that which is before, and forgetting the things that are behind him, holding fast by faith his righteousness in Christ. On this account, he adds, "Call out and say, 'I sought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.' (Psa. xxxiv. 5.) Wherefore? Because if thou art enlightened, if thou beginnest to gain here a good conscience, temptations do not cease, for some weakness still remains in thee, until the mortal shall put on immortality. God will purify all; he will deliver thee from all thy fears—seek Him." By true prayer, proceeding from the heart, man

* Ἡ δὲ *παρατήρησις λοιπὸν μὴ περὶ τόπον ἔστω, ἀλλὰ περὶ τὸν τρόπον τῆς εὐχῆς*.—Chrysost. *in* 1 *Tim.* 8, § 1.

therefore becomes continually more purified; and a purified man, who is transformed into the image of God continually from one degree of glory to another, must thereby be continually attracted to God in Christ as the only fountain of blessedness.

In conclusion, we would here quote the prayer of a man whose character for piety is sufficiently attested by it, as it has been preserved for us by Chrysostom: "We thank thee for all thy benefits which thou hast shewn to us unworthy beings, from the first day until the present, for those we know and those we do not know; for those that are manifest, and for those that are hidden; for benefits in actions and benefits in words; for benefits wished for or unwished for; for afflictions, for refreshments, for hell, for punishment, for the kingdom of heaven. We pray thee to preserve our soul holy, having a pure conscience, an end worthy of thy philanthropy. O thou who hast loved us so as to give thy only-begotten Son for us, grant that we may become worthy of thy love. O only-begotten, O Christ, give us wisdom in thy word and in thy fear; inspire us with the power that comes from thee. O thou who gavest thy only-begotten Son for us, and sendest forth thy Holy Spirit for the remission of our sins, whether we sin voluntarily or involuntarily, pardon us and impute it not to us; remember all that call upon thy name in truth; remember all that wish us well, and those who wish the contrary; for we are all of us men."*

* Εὐχαριστοῦμεν ὑπὲρ πασῶν τῶν εὐεργεσιῶν σοῦ τῶν ἐκ πρώτης ἡμέρας μέχρι τῆς παρούσης εἰς ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀναξίους ἐπιδεικνυμένων· ὑπὲρ ὧν ἴσμεν, καὶ οὐκ ἴσμεν· ὑπὲρ τῶν φανερων, ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀφανῶν· τῶν ἐν ἔργῳ γενομένων, τῶν ἐν λόγῳ· τῶν ἑκοντί, των ἀκοντί· πασῶν τῶν εἰς τοὺς ἀναξίους ἡμᾶς γεγενημένων· ὑπὲρ θλίψεων, ὑπὲρ ἀνέσεων, ὑπὲρ τῆς γεέννης, ὑπὲρ τῆς κολάσεως, ὑπὲρ βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν. Παρακαλοῦμέν σε φυλάξαι τὴν ψύχην ἡμῶν ἁγίαν, καθαρὰν συνείδησιν ἔχουσαν, τέλος ἄξιον τῆς φιλανθρωπίας σου. Ὁ ἀγαπήσας ἡμᾶς ὥστε τὸν μονογενῆ σου δοῦναι ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, καταξίωσον ἀξίους γενεσθαι τῆς σῆς ἀγάπης· ὸς ἐν τῷ λόγῳ σου σοφίαν, καὶ ἐν τῷ φόβῳ σου, μονογενὴς, Χριστέ, ἔμπνευσον ἰσχὺν τὴν παρὰ σοῦ. Ὁ τὸν μονογενῆ δοὺς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά σοῦ τὸ ἅγιον ἐξαποστείλας εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἡμετερων ἁμαρτιῶν, εἴ τι ἑκόντες ἢ ἄκοντες ἡμάρτομεν, συγχώρησον, καὶ μὴ λογισῃ· μνήσθητι πάντων τῶν ἐπικαλουμένων το ὄνομά σου ἐν ἀληθείᾳ· μνήσθητι πάντων τῶν εὖ, καὶ τἀναντία ἡμῖν θελόντων. Πάντες γὰρ ἄνθρωποί ἐσμεν.—Chrysost. *in Col.* 10, § 3 (*Viri evjusdane sancti precatio*).

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRISTIAN FESTIVALS.

As the prayers of Christians were not confined to any definite times, but their whole life was to be a continued prayer, so also their whole life was to be a festival—a day dedicated to their God and Redeemer. All the sabbatical and festive regulations of the Old Covenant were closely connected with the spirit of bondage and minority, since men were confined under outward ordinances.

The redeemed, who had received the spirit of adoption, no longer required such discipline. Hence the Apostle Paul appealed to the Galatian Christians who had allowed themselves to be seduced to make the Jewish festivals a matter of prime importance in religion. "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire to be again in bondage?" The law of the sanctification of the Sabbath is, like the whole ceremonial law, abolished for Christians, and it can only be applied in a spiritual sense to the Christian dispensation, inasmuch as the Christian ought to sanctify every day as a day of the Lord, by a life founded on faith in the Redeemer, and on heart-communion with him. In opposition to the carnal Jewish passover connected with outward observances, the Apostle Paul says, "Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us." But he does not infer from this, Therefore you ought, instead of the Jewish feast dedicated to the remembrance of freedom from earthly, bodily bondage, to appoint a paschal feast in remembrance of your freedom from the service of sin by the sacrifice of Christ; no! your whole life, he would say, must be such a spiritual paschal feast, consecrated by faith to the redemption gained for you by the sufferings of Christ, while you strive to preserve the purification from sin bestowed upon you, and to keep from all the pollution of sin, from the dominion of which you have been freed by the Redeemer. "Let us keep the feast," he says, "not with old leaven," not with the leaven of sin, the nature of the old man, but as men created anew, with the new bread (the new divine life which we, as justified, have received from

our Redeemer), "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," (inward truthfulness, the essence of genuine morality, as falsehood is the essence of sin). And Chrysostom justly remarks on this passage:* "Therefore the present time is a feast-time, for when he says, 'Let us keep the feast (in Luther's translation the Easter feast) he does not say this because it was then Easter or Whitsuntide, but to show that all times are feast-times for Christians, in virtue of the superabundance of the blessings imparted to them. For what good has not been imparted to Christians? The Son of God has become man for thy sake; He has freed thee from death; He has called thee to the kingdom of heaven. How canst thou, who hast obtained and art obtaining such great things, help making thy whole life a feast? No one, therefore, should be cast down on account of poverty, sickness, or persecution; for we have a perpetual feast-time. Therefore the Apostle Paul says (Phil. iv. 4): 'Rejoice in the Lord always.' On feast-days no one wears soiled garments. Therefore we must not do it, for it is a marriage-feast; a spiritual marriage-feast (Matt. xxii. 2); 'for the kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king who made a marriage for his son.' Now when a king makes a marriage-feast, and that for his son, what greater gift can there be than such a feast? Let no one, then, come clad in rags to the marriage-feast; but I speak not here of outward garments, but of impure works." Of this feast of Christians not confined to any special time, Augustin says: "When men here celebrate their feasts of revelry, they are accustomed to have musical instruments before their houses, or choirs of musicians. And what do we say when we hear this as we pass by? What is going on here? and the answer is, a feast. We are told it is a birth-day or a wedding that is here celebrated, as an apology for the revelry that is indulged in on the occasion. In God's house there is a perpetual feast, for nothing transitory is here celebrated; the choir of angels, the presence of God's countenance, joy without decay. This feast is without beginning or end. From this everlasting feast of joy there resounds an inde-

* Ἑορτὴς ἄρα ὁ παρὼν καιρός. Καὶ γὰρ· εἰπὼν, ἑορτάζωμεν, οὐκ ἐπειδὴ πάσχα παρῆν, οὐδὲ ἐπειδὴ ἡ πεντηκοστὴ ἔλεγεν, ἀλλὰ δεικνὺς ὅτι πᾶς ὁ χρόνος, ἑορτῆς ἐστι καιρὸς τοῖς Χριστιανοῖς διὰ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῶν ὑθέντων ἀγαθῶν.—Chrysost. *in* 1 *Cor. Hom.* 15, § 3.

scribable echo on the ears of our heart, though the world does not repeat the echo. Whoever walks in the house of God, and contemplates the wonders of God in the redemption of believers; his ear will be ravished by these festive heavenly sounds."

Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian of the fifth century, justly remarks: "Christ and his apostles laid down no law for festivals, but left it to the free expression of grateful feeling in reference to the divine benefits." But the multiplication of festivals is no proof of the liveliness and depth of these feelings; for the first Christians believed that while their whole life was continually penetrated by these feelings, and was highly spiritual, while the conflict between Christianity and the world was everywhere becoming more intense, that there was less need of such outward means of remembrance and excitement. They found sufficient excitement in every Friday as the day of the Lord's passion, and in every Sunday as the day of his resurrection. We cannot, certainly, deduce the establishment of particular annual festivals from a perversion of the Christian life which had sunk down from its original height, but must find in it the mark of a natural development of it; so that the reference to the fundamental facts of the Christian consciousness which at first were celebrated on particular days of the week, was afterwards attached to certain days in the year, in order by that means to penetrate the Christian life and communion more completely with it. Only it was injurious, though by no means a necessary consequence, when a false contrast was formed between the feasts and the rest of the Christian life, and thus the original spiritual character of the latter was lost; as we have already heard Chrysostom lament, that, in great cities, many believed that they had religion enough if they attended the leading festivals of the church.

Augustin opposes the celebration of a feast with worldly diversions in the following manner: "See to it, that, since ye desire to celebrate this day in a carnal manner, ye do not make yourselves unfit for celebrating what this feast means, eternally with the angels. Perhaps that drunken man whom I reprove, will say to me, 'Thou hast, forsooth, preached to us that this feast announces to us eternal joy; shall I not therefore do myself some good?' Yes, thou mightest truly do thy-

self good, and not harm! For it announces joy to thee if thou art a temple of God. But if thou defilest the temple of God by drunkenness, the apostle tells thee (1 Cor. iii. 17), 'If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.'"

As the whole life of the Christian ought to be continually penetrated and animated by Him who is the great object of the Christian festivals; as, therefore, these festivals ought to serve to excite afresh in a Christian the ideas and feelings which, if his inner life be Christian, ought never to be withdrawn from it, Chrysostom presents this very strikingly in a sermon preached at Whitsuntide: "It is a Judaizing notion to appear before God only three times a year: to the Jews it was said (Exod. xxiii. 14), 'Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year;' but from us God expects that we should at all times appear before him; and with the Jews the separation of space was the cause that only that number of assemblies could take place; for the worship of God was then confined to one place, therefore they could assemble only a few times in the year: for in Jerusalem, and nowhere else, could they worship God; on this account God commanded them to appear three times a year before him, and the distance of space served as an excuse. But we are commanded constantly to celebrate a feast, for we always have a feast. And in order that ye may know that there is always a feast for us, I will name to you the object of the feasts, and ye will know that there is a feast every day. Our first feast is that of Christmas. What is the object of this feast? That God appeared on earth and walked with men. But this is for all times, for he said: 'I am with you always, even to the end of the world.' We can therefore celebrate Christmas at all times. What is the meaning of the second feast? We then announce the death of Christ—this is the Paschal feast; but since at all times we announce the Lord's death, we can also at all times celebrate the Paschal feast. What is the object of the feast to-day? That the Holy Spirit may come to us. But as the only-begotten Son of God is always with believers, so also is the Holy Spirit. Whence does this appear? Our Lord says (John xiv. 15, 16): "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; the Spirit of truth.' As Christ says of himself, 'Lo, I am

with you always, even to the end of the world,' and we can at all times celebrate the feast of the appearance of Christ; so he also said of the Spirit that he is always with us, and we can always celebrate Whitsuntide."

Bishop Theodoret, according to the custom of the bishops in that age, announced a Christmas festival in the following words: "When the only-begotten Son of God became man and effected our salvation, the men of that day, who beheld the fountain of blessing, celebrated no festival. But now, by land and sea, in cities and villages, they celebrate the memorial of these blessings, though they never saw the source of them with their bodily eyes." The same bishop, when bowed down with many sufferings, thus announced the festival: "Sorrow has, indeed heavily oppressed me; for I have received not an iron but a human nature; but the remembrance of the Lord's birth has been an antidote for me." Augustin said at this festival: "May the humble humble themselves before God, that by his help, as the support of their weakness, they may rise to God's height." And again:* "Rejoice, ye righteous, this is the birthday of the Justifier; rejoice, ye weak and sick, this is the birthday of the Saviour; rejoice, ye prisoners, this is the birthday of the Redeemer; rejoice, ye slaves, it is the birthday of the Lord; rejoice, ye free men, it is the birthday of the Liberator; rejoice, all ye Christians, it is the birthday of Christ!" An ingenious and profound thought!—as although the remembrance of the birth of the Redeemer must on the one hand call forth the same feelings in the hearts of all Christians, yet on the other hand, according to their various characters, circumstances, and wants, the remembrance of the birth of *Him* who, as Origen says, became, in a higher sense than Paul, all things to all men, in order to satisfy the wants of all, as the minds of men were affected by them in a variety of ways.

Leo the Great, bishop of Rome, spoke as follows at a Christmas festival:† "Our Saviour was born to-day, that we

* Exultate justi; Natalis est Justificatoris. Exultate debites et ægroti; Natalis est Salvatoris. Exultate captivi; Natalis est Redemptoris. Exultent servi; Natalis est Dominantis. Exultent liberi; Natalis est Liberantis. Exultent omnes Christiani; Natalis est Christi.—August. *Serm.* 184 *in Natali Domini*, § 2.

† Salvator noster, dilectissimi, hodie natus est: gaudeamus. Neque

might rejoice; for no mourning is admissible when that life is born which destroys the fear of death, and pours into our hearts the joy of a promised eternity. No one is excluded from a participation of this joy; for our Lord, the destroyer of death and sin, when he found no one free from guilt, came to free all. Let the saint triumph, because he hastens to receive the crown of victory; let the sinner rejoice, because he is invited to the forgiveness of sins; let the heathen be awakened, because he is called to life."

About Christmas time many heathen feasts were celebrated in the Roman empire, with which the Christian festival might have connected itself, had more pure and elevated views been taken of their meaning. And very naturally Christianity, with all its opposition against what was ungodly in men's sentiments on religious subjects, could easily find certain points of connection, since the Father of Spirits, in whom we live and move and have our being, has nowhere left himself without a witness, by the wants implanted in human nature, which find their satisfaction in Christianity alone, and by those undefined longings excited in human nature, which are first developed into clear consciousness by Christianity.

Thus, at this season, the heathen celebrated in their Saturnalia the remembrance of a golden age that was deeply implanted in the consciousness of fallen man, although the sentiment associated with it was not understood. Here Christianity found a point of connection, since it taught men that the true golden age was destined to be restored by Christ. He had, indeed, established no such golden age on earth as the imaginations of men whose hearts clave to the world represented it, but the true golden age which harmonized with the longings of the soul allied to God. What men imaged to themselves in the peaceful innocence of a golden as belonging to the past, Christianity held forth to them in the present and the future. The Christian does not

enim locum fas est ibi esse tristitiæ, ubi natalis est vitæ quæ consumto mortalitatis timore nobis ingerit de promissa æternitate lætitiam. Nemo ab hujus alacritatis participatione secernitur, una cunctis lætitiæ communis est ratio, quia Dominus noster, peccati mortisque destructor, sicut nullum a reatu liberum reperit, ita liberandis omnibus venit. Exultet sanctus, quia propinquat ad palmam. Gaudeat peccator, quia invitatur ad veniam.—Leo M. *Serm.* 21, cap. 21.

allow himself to be deceived by a dazzling ideal inspired by fancy, but which proves a nullity in actual life; he knows where he has to look for the realization of the original after which he strives; namely, in heaven, and in the time when the transformed earth shall blend harmoniously with heaven, and only serve for its manifestation. But the birth of the Saviour had already brought down heaven to earth, and had removed the separation between them. Amidst the conflicts of earth the Christian possesses the elevated consciousness of being a citizen of heaven; he has the golden age in his heart; he tastes the powers of the world to come, and already partakes of the joys of heaven. He finds the mild, paternal reign of Saturn, in the kingdom of his heavenly Father, regained by the spirit of adoption, the kingdom of the Redeemer, the kingdom of grace, where the soft, gentle yoke of love is substituted for that stern schoolmaster, the law. While the pagans sought to forget in noisy, wild revelry that mournful reality from the galling yoke of which they freed themselves once a-year, the Christian surrendered himself to a holy, tranquil joy; he saw earthly life itself transformed by his Saviour, and human nature sanctified from its first development in order to become the revealer of a divine life in human form. In remembrance of the golden age, the Saturnalia removed the distance between freemen and slaves, and for a brief interval the latter were freed from the yoke of bondage. How beautiful was the connection here with the birthday of Him who brought the same true freedom to both bond and free, the same blessedness, the same higher life—in whose kingdom there is neither bond nor free! On this account Augustin called Christmas the festival of slaves as well as of freemen. Moreover, it was a custom at this festival to make presents and burn lights; and at the close, was the *sigillaria*, or children's feast, when they received presents of little earthenware figures (*sigilla*). Then also, at Christmas, was the festival of the shortest day, the birthday of the new sun (*brumalia, dies natalis invicti solis*).* The analogy it bore to the birthday of the sun of the spiritual world, the beginning of the new spiritual life, of the new creation in the human race, was often alluded to by preachers

* See Neander's General History, vol. iii. p. 442. Standard Library Edition. [Tr.]

of the Western Church; as, for example, Augustin: "He who for our sakes humbled himself and came down to us, chose the shortest day, or that on which the light begins to increase; and although silently, yet he admonishes us by his appearance at this time, as with a loud-sounding voice, that we may learn to be rich in Him who for our sakes became poor; that we may obtain freedom in Him who for our sakes assumed the form of a servant; that we may possess heaven in Him who for our sakes was born on earth." And Leo the Great says: "At all times and seasons, the birth of our Lord and Saviour must be present to the souls of believers that are aiming at the divine; but this birth, the object of wonder both to heaven and earth sets before us no day more conspicuous than the present, which by the light that beams forth in the natural world offers to our senses a little image of the miracle of grace." And then he points those who were wavering between paganism and Christianity, from the natural sun to the sun of the spiritual world. "Do not make thyself a slave of that light in which birds and serpents, flies and worms rejoice. Raise thyself to the incorporeal light with the incorporeal senses, and with the whole sensibility of the heart receive the true light which lighteth all men who come into the world (John i. 9),* and of whom the Psalmist says: 'They looked unto him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed.' (Psa. xxxiv. 5.) For if we are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwell in us, then, what every believer has in his own soul, is more wonderful than what he admires in the heavens; and that we may contemplate our hope more closely, we should consider, at the feast of our Lord's birth, how much divine grace has granted to our nature."

Of earlier date than Christmas were the festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide in the Christian church; for the reference to Jesus the crucified and Jesus the glorified, whom believers are bound to follow through repentance and the cross to glory—this two-fold reference pervaded, as we have often intimated, the whole life of the first Christmas, and from it the most ancient circle of Christian festivals began. Con-

* According to the original, it should be translated: "which coming into the world"—*i. e.* by its appearance in human nature—"enlighteneth all men."

fession of sin, repentance, crucifying of the flesh, fasting, and prayer, in the contemplation of the sufferings of Christ on account of our sins—these formed the preparation for the celebration of communion with the glorified Christ, the conqueror over sin and death, of communion with him here by faith, and by actual vision hereafter. The end of that fasting preparative to the celebration of Easter would, indeed, be lost sight of by many (as is always the case with outward institutions) who would mistake the means for the end; but the teachers of the church always directed the attention to the latter, and to point out that mere outward fasting without the conversion of the soul to God, and true repentance expressing itself in the life, were of no advantage. They proceeded from the point of view which regards the fast as preparative to the festival of the resurrection, as representing the earthly life of Christians, as preparative to the festival of eternal life. "This crucifixion," says Augustin, "must be continued through the whole life of the Christian, which is passed in the midst of temptations; it is that cross of which the servant of Christ is not ashamed, but of which he boasts, saying (Gal. vi. 14): 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.' This cross relates not only to forty days, but to the whole life. Thus must thou ever live, O Christian! If thy steps are not to sink in the mire of earth, desert not this cross!" Leo the Great says: "If it is becoming to appear in better clothing on feast-days, and to manifest the joy of the soul by the dress of the body; if we even more carefully adorn the house of prayer, is it not requisite that the Christian soul, which is the true and living temple of God, should adorn its form with wisdom, and that when it designs to celebrate the festival of its redemption, it should carefully guard against the defilement of sin? For of what use is the outward show of decorum, if the inner man be defiled by sin? Let every one prove himself, and judge himself. Let him see to it, whether he can find in the bottom of his heart that peace which Christ alone gives." The same Leo says, in another fast-sermon, that Christians during a fast ought to exercise simply the same watchfulness against their spiritual enemies which ought to regulate their whole lives. "We must know that

we cannot conquer our enemies in any other way than by conquering ourselves. For there are many conflicts in ourselves, and the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. If in these conflicts the sensual desires are victorious, the soul will, to its great disgrace, lose its peculiar dignity, and it will be most pernicious for that to serve which ought to rule. But when the soul is in subjection to its ruler, and rejoices in grace from above, and overcomes the allurements of earthly pleasure, then the reason will maintain its due sovereignty, and no temptation of evil will shake its steadfastness. Then man has true peace and true freedom, when the body is governed by the soul, and the soul by God."* Cæsarius, bishop of Arles, in the beginning of the sixth century, when exhorting his flock, during a fast, to diligent and serious attention to the Divine Word, said; "You must certainly know that as it is with the body which has been long famished, so it will be with the soul which is not constantly nourished by the word of God; and as the body is withered and dried up by hunger and want, till it becomes like a lifeless image, so the soul, if it is not nourished by the word of God, becomes dry, and unfruitful, and fit for no good work. See, my brethren, if we fill our barns and our cellars every year, that we may have food during the year for our bodies, how much ought we to collect that our souls may receive nourishment for eternity? At least, in these days, may the hindrances arising from the world give way, which, according to the Scriptures, cause many to be negligent. May carnal pleasures and the poisonous attractions of the world cease to allure: the time which you were wont to devote to exciting amusements, begin to occupy in reading the Scriptures. Instead of idle conversation and poisonous evil-speaking of others, engage in conversations respecting the Holy Scriptures. In the hours which we were accustomed to pass to the detriment of our souls, let us visit the sick and those in prison, receive strangers, and be reconciled to those with whom we have been at variance. Hear the Holy Scriptures read as you are wont, in the church, and read them at home, in order that ye

* Tunc est vera pax homini et vera libertas, quando et caro animo judice regitur, et animus Deo præside gubernatur.—Leo M. *Serm.* 39, cap. 2.

may be able to speak of the word of God in your houses and wherever ye may be, and also to instruct others."

As at Antioch, during the fasts, divine worship was daily performed, and the Scriptures read and expounded, Chrysostom held this forth to his church as a source of consolation in difficult times, when the city was threatened with great misfortunes. In one of his fast-sermons, he says: "In order to endure with fortitude what has now befallen us, we gain no small encouragement from this opportunity; for it must greatly contribute to soothe our pain, that we daily assemble to hear the Holy Scriptures read, to see one another, to sympathise, to receive the blessing, and then to return home." Chrysostom represents the fasts as an ordinance of the church introduced from a consideration of human weakness; he says: "Many persons formerly came without a proper collectedness of mind to the Holy Supper, and especially at the time when it was instituted by Christ. Our fathers, perceiving the injurious effects of such thoughtless communion, appointed forty days for fasting, prayer, hearing the divine word, and meetings of the church, in order that in these days we may all be carefully purified by prayer, by works of Christian love, by fasting and watching, by tears for our sins, and by all other things, so that we may come according to our ability with a pure conscience to the communion; and that much good has been effected by the habits to which this humiliation leads, is evident. We have continued during the whole year to call and to summon to the fasts, and no one has hearkened to our words; but now the time of fasting comes, and without an exhortation from any one even the most careless are aroused, because the time itself serves for an exhortation. Now when a Jew or a pagan asks thee, Why dost thou fast? say not, on account of the sufferings of Christ, for then thou wilt present to him a weak side; for Christ's passion is not a cause for sorrow, but only for joy, since the cross of Christ has atoned for sin: it has become the means of purifying the world, it is the reconciliation of a long enmity, it has opened the gates of heaven, has made the enemies of God into his friends, brought us back to heaven, exalted our nature to the right hand of God, and gained a thousand other blessings for us; therefore we must not mourn, but rejoice and exult for all this. We

are not to mourn on account of the cross—far be it! but on account of our own sins."*

As the preparation for the Easter festival brought to mind the grace vouchsafed to all sinners, the fathers of the church especially recommended at this time that every one, in his own station, should evince his gratitude for the love and compassion of his heavenly Father, by showing love and compassion to others. The bishops endeavoured to settle all disputes in their congregations by reminding them of the approaching festival. Leo the Great, in a fast-sermon, says: "Although we ought first of all to relieve the poverty of believers, yet we must also show our sympathy with the misery of those who have not yet received the gospel; for in all we must love the fellowship of nature. This must also make us kind to those who are in any way subject to us, especially if they have been already regenerated by the same grace and are redeemed by the same price of Christ's blood. For we have it in common with them, that we are created in the image of God, and they are not different from us either by bodily birth or spiritual regeneration. We are sanctified by the same Spirit, we live in the same faith, we meet at the same sacraments. This unity must not be despised: a fellowship of this kind ought not to be insignificant in our esteem; but it should make us more gentle in every respect that we have those persons under us, with whom we are subject to the same Lord. If therefore many have wounded their hearts by heavy transgressions, let them receive forgiveness in these days of reconciliation."

The last of these weeks of fasting which preceded Easter was peculiarily distinguished, and on that account called *the great week*. "It is called great," says Chrysostom, "because the goods are great and superabundant which are imparted to us in it; for in this week the long conflict terminated which annihilated the power of death, took away the curse, set us

* Τό γε πάσχα οὐ νηστείας ἐστὶν, οὐδὲ πένθους ἀλλ' εὐφροσύνης καὶ χαρᾶς ὑπόθεσις. Ὁ γὰρ σταυρὸς ἀνεῖλε τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, καθάρσιον τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐγένετο, καταλλαγὴ χρονίας ἔχθρας, ἀνέῳξε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὰς πύλας, τοὺς μισουμένους φίλους ἐποίησεν, εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐπανήγαγεν, ἐν ὲξεῖᾳ τοῦ θρόνου ἐκάθισε τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν, μυρία ἕτερα παρέσχεν ἡμῖν ἀγαθα. . . . Οὐ πενθοῦμεν διὰ τὸν σταυρὸν, μὴ γένοιτο, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὰ οἰκεῖα ἁμαρτήματα.—Chrysost. *in eos qui pascha jejunant*, 3, § 4.

free from the tyranny of Satan, established the reconciliation of God with man, made heaven accessible, reunited men and angels with one another, beheld the God of peace in heaven, and made peace on earth." In this week prisoners, the worst criminals excepted, were released from their fetters. Often at this period letters from the emperor appeared in the provinces, which gave entire liberty to all who had been committed merely for lesser offences. "The emperors," says Chrysostom, "imitate their Lord according to human ability; for as he (they say) freed us from the miserable dungeons of sin and granted us the enjoyment of a thousand blessings, so must we, as far as we are able, imitate our Lord's philanthropy." This week was opened by Palm Sunday, so important for the whole history of the human race by the openly expressed glorification of Jesus, as the promised founder of the kingdom of God, and at the same time the kingdom itself appeared. "Not from one city," says Chrysostom, in a sermon on Palm-Sunday, "do we come to-day to meet Christ; not only from Jerusalem, but from all parts of the world, congregations consisting of thousands come to meet the Lord Jesus, not holding and waving palm-branches, but presenting to the Lord Christ alms, philanthropy, virtue, fasting, prayers, and all the indications of piety."

On the Saturday of this week (the so-called great sabbath, *τὸ μέγα σάββατον*), old and young proceeded at night with lights and torches to the churches, where, watching, praying, and singing, they waited for the morning of the resurrection-festival. "Even many of those," says Augustin, "who are not yet Christians watch during this night—many from grief, many from shame; some also who are almost believers do not sleep from the fear of God." He means to say, that vexation on account of the universal adoration of Christ which is exhibited on this festival-night does not allow the most zealous pagans to sleep; others are ashamed to sleep, because it would make it known that they were pagans; and others who wavered in their convictions were so powerfully impressed by what they witnessed on this night, and by the thoughts and feelings that it excited, that they could not sleep. The great power which a conviction that animates a whole community exercises over those who live in its neighbourhood, according as it is on the side of truth or of error, influences their minds

for good or evil. Augustin says on this point, "With what joy must the friend of Christ watch, since even the enemy of Christ watches with pain? With what ardent zeal must the Christian watch during such a glorification of Christ, when even the pagan is ashamed to sleep? Does it not become him, who has entered this great house, to watch at this great festival, since already he watches who prepares to enter it? Let us therefore watch and pray, that we may inwardly and outwardly celebrate this night-watching. God speaks to us by his word, and we must speak to God in our prayers. If we hear his word obediently, he to whom we pray will dwell in us."

The morning of the festival of the resurrection dawned, and the Christians gave signs of universal joy The Risen One was present to the eye of faith; the resurrection of Christ served to believers for a sure pledge of their own resurrection to eternal life, and they felt constrained to rejoice as called from death unto life. This transition from death unto life was placed before their eyes, as they had experienced it in themselves at their conversion, by the great number of the baptized on the former night [in great cities often thousands], who in their white garments [signs of the purity in Christ which they were to preserve] united for the first time with the assemblage of believers at the Holy Supper, and all were wont to partake of it on the resurrection-morning. In order to call forth universal joy in the Lord, they sung Psa. cxviii. 24: "This is the day which the Lord has made, we will be glad and rejoice in it." In allusion to this circumstance, Chrysostom, in a sermon on this day, remarks: "Death is now only a sleep. Death, which before Christ's appearance had a fearful aspect, is now easily become an object to be despised. Behold the glorious victory of the resurrection. By it a thousand blessings are secured to us; in virtue of it we mock death, we despise the present life and aspire after future blessings. In virtue of it we have, if we are only willing, though enveloped in bodies, all that the happy spirits have. Let us then rejoice. For although it is our Lord who has won the victory, yet the joy is common to us, for he has effected everything for our salvation. On this day he freed human nature from the dominion of Satan, and brought it back to its original dignity. For when I see the

first-fruits of my nature so victorious over death, I fear no longer; I am no longer alarmed at the conflict; I look not at my own weakness, but I gaze on the superabundant power of Him who has assured me of his aid; for what will not the conqueror over death, who has deprived it of all its power, do for the nature that is related to his own, which he valued so much that he assumed its form out of his great love for man? Let no one therefore be dejected to-day on account of his poverty, for this is a spiritual feast: let no rich man pride himself on his riches, for he can contribute nothing to this feast by his wealth. All distinctions are here taken away. There is one table for rich and poor, bond and free. It is divine grace, and knows no respect of persons. Yes! why should I speak of rich and poor? The same table is spread for him who occupies the imperial throne and sways the sceptre of the world, and for the poor man who asks for alms. The poor man comes with the same confidence as the emperor to partake of the Holy Supper. Yes! do I say with the same confidence?—often the poor man comes with greater confidence."

Augustin at this feast says: "Let us believe in Christ crucified, but who rose again on the third day. Retain this firmly in your hearts. Confess it with the mouth; but have the faith of Christians, not of the devil (James ii. 19); be inflamed with the fire of love, which the devil has not, the fire with which those two disciples burned as they were on the way; for when they recognized Christ, and he parted from them, they said one to another, 'Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?' This fire draws you upwards; it raises you to Heaven. Whatever toils you may suffer on earth, however much the adversary may bow the heart of the Christian down to earth, the flame of love draws him to the Most High. Understand a simile; when thou holdest a burning torch upright, the flame rises towards heaven; turn the torch downwards, still the flame goes towards heaven. It knows no other way; it seeks heaven. One person is warm, another cold; the warm kindles the cold, and whoever has only a little of that flame in himself, let him pray that it may increase; the Lord is ready to give, if we only seek to receive with open hearts."

Leo the Great thus speaks:* "If we really believe in our hearts what we confess with our mouths, then are we crucified with Christ as well as risen with him. (Col. iii. 1.) But in order that the souls of believers may know by what means, despising worldly desires, they may attain to heavenly wisdom, the Lord promises his presence, saying: 'Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world.' Jesus fulfils the meaning of his name *Immanuel* (God with us, Isa. vii. 14), and though exalted to heaven, he does not forsake those who have received adoption. He who sits at the right hand of the Father, dwells with the whole body of the church; he who calls us above to glory, strengthens us here below to patience."

Thus the whole period from Easter to Whitsuntide was connected, as a commemorative festival, with what the glorified Redeemer is continually effecting for the glorification of the human nature he has redeemed, until it is exalted to the complete participation of his glory. Christians prayed only in an upright posture, remembering that Christ has restored fallen humanity to heaven. There was no fasting. In the churches the triumphant praise of God resounded in the hallelujahs. The Acts of the Apostles was read in the churches, as containing living evidence of the resurrection of Christ; for how could the apostles—since they had seen their expectations that still clave to the earthly and to the outward appearance of Christ, at once annihilated by his death—(the appearances of Christ after his resurrection being the necessary links between what the apostles were at an earlier period, and what they afterwards became)—how could they speak and act with such confidence and power, unless He who had been crucified in weakness had revealed himself to them, and then through them to others, as the risen, living, glorified Christ? Augustin says on this point: "Since our existence is divided into these two sections, the one under the temptations and sufferings of this present life, the other, which is first attained in the security and joy of eternity, so the circle of the festival is divided into two sections, the time before and after Easter. The time before Easter points out

* Si incunctanter itaque, dilectissimi, credimus corde, quod ore profitemur, nos in Christo crucifixi, nos sumus mortui, nos sepulti, nos etiam in ipso die tertio suscitati.—Leo M. *Serm.* 72, cap. 3.

the conflict of the present life—the time after Easter the blessedness which we shall attain hereafter. On this account we employ ourselves during the former time in fasting and prayer; but during the latter we cease from fasting, and spend it in celebrating the praises of God. Both are prefigured for us in our Head. The Lord's passion shows us the present life of suffering while we fight and suffer, and at last, die. The resurrection and glorification of the Lord show us the life which we shall receive."

In that jubilee of fifty days, two events were specially presented to the minds of believers; the ascension of Christ, as that by which human nature was raised to heavenly glory, a type of what all believers as the members, whom he as the Head will draw after him, have to hope for; and, secondly, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as the effect and living evidence of that glorification, a pledge for all, as they were now connected in faith with the glorified Christ, that they should be filled with the Spirit of the glorified One, made continually more like him in their inner life by that Spirit, and be changed from glory to glory until they attained to his perfect likeness and to perfect communion with him. "The resurrection of the Lord,"* said Augustin, in a sermon at the Feast of the Ascension, "is our hope—the ascension of the Lord is our glorification. If we celebrate the Feast of his Ascension in a right, believing, holy, pious manner, we must ascend with him to heaven, and have our hearts above. But thus ascending, we must not exalt ourselves and trust in our own merits; our hearts must be above, but with the Lord." And in another sermon, on a similar occasion, he says: "To-day our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven. Let our hearts also ascend with him. (Col. iii. 1, 2.) For as he has ascended, and yet is not removed from us, so also are we here with him, although not yet glorified with him. He who descended from heaven, does not grudge us heaven; but as it were calls to us, 'Ye are my members, if ye wish to ascend

* Resurrectio Domini, spes nostra; adscensio Domini, glorificatio nostra. . . . Si ergo recte, si fideliter, si devote, si sancte, si pie adscensionem Domini celebramus, adscendamus cum illo, et sursum cor habeamus. Adscendentes autem non extollamur, nec de nostris quasi de propriis meritis præsumamus. Sursum enim cor habere debemus, sed ad Dominum.—August. *Serm.* 261, § 1.

to heaven.' To this call may we meanwhile strengthen ourselves; thither may our most ardent longings be directed; living on earth, may we always bear in mind that we belong to heaven."

In the first-fruits of mankind the whole human nature was sanctified and blessed. This is the rich, pregnant thought which goes through Chrysostom's beautiful sermon on the Ascension. "Christ," says he, "has carried the first-fruits of our nature to the Father, and the Father was so pleased with the gift, on account of the dignity of the Giver, and the holiness of what he presented, that he received it with his own hands, placed it by his side, and said: 'Sit thou on my right hand.' To what nature has God said: 'Sit thou on my right hand?' To that which was once addressed: 'Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.'" "May we give ourselves up to spiritual joy, full of thankfulness," says Leo: "and may we direct the open eyes of our soul to that height where Christ dwells. Souls that are called from above, dare not allow themselves to be pressed down by earthly desires. By the path of love on which Christ descended to us, must we also ascend to him."

In the Oriental church the Acts of the Apostles was read at public worship during Easter to the close of Whitsuntide; and Chrysostom, in a beautiful homily, has given the reason of this practice. "Not without reason," he says, "have the fathers observed these times; they had wise views in doing so; they did not do it in order to subject our freedom to the yoke of times and seasons, but condescended to the poverty of the weaker, that they might be exalted to the riches of knowledge." He endeavours to illustrate this method of proceeding by the example of the Apostle Paul, "who, since he wished to lead the weak (those who were still entangled in the Jewish stand-point) condescended to them by such an observance. For if he had always remained on his own high stand-point, he would never have been able to lead upwards those who were lying below it. It was necessary to lower himself first, in order that he might raise others. On this account the apostles lowered themselves from the height of evangelical conduct, in order to raise the Jews from the lower Jewish stand-point to their own height." After having thus given a reason why the fathers, who by no means wished to infringe on Christian freedom, yet made the reading

of the Scriptures dependent on such particular times, he brings forward the reason for this special arrangement. "The miracles wrought by the apostles are the proof of the resurrection of Christ. Therefore, the fathers have appointed that what would specially serve to accredit the resurrection of the Lord, should be read at the festival of Easter. Thou hast not beheld Christ risen with thy bodily eyes, but thou beholdest him risen with the eyes of faith; for the testimony of the miracles wrought by the apostles brings thee to the intuition of faith."

Chrysostom thus expressed himself at Whitsuntide: "Many blessings have often descended from heaven to earth for mankind, but never before this time such as we celebrate to-day. God caused manna to fall, and gave them bread from heaven. (Psa. lxxviii. 24.) Then fire from the Lord descended and converted the backsliding Jewish people, and devoured the burnt-offerings on the altar. (1 Kings xviii. 38.) The rain came again, when all were pining with hunger, and spread universal joy. This was a great thing; but far greater is the present event. For to-day has descended, not manna, or fire, or rain, but an effusion of the gracious gifts of the Spirit; not streams of water, to fructify the earth; but those streams which operate on human nature, so that it brings forth to them who scatter the seed upon it the fruits of holiness. Those who have received some drops of that heavenly shower, immediately forgot their nature, and the whole earth was at once filled with angels; not with the angels of heaven, but with such as manifest in a human body the holy life of heavenly spirits; for it was not those who descended, but, what was more wonderful, men on earth had risen to their holiness, for they did not proceed as disembodied spirits, but remained in human nature, and became angels in disposition. Not ten days," he says, "had passed since Christ's ascension, and he sent to us spiritual gifts of grace, as presents which sealed the reconciliation he had effected; for in order that no one might doubt whether Christ had reconciled us to the Father, and to prove to us that he had reconciled him with our nature, he sent us immediately the gifts of the festival of reconciliation, as when enemies are reconciled, proofs of affection and presents follow upon the reconciliation. On our part we have given faith, and have received the gifts of grace; on our part we have given obedience, and have

received justification." To the carnally-minded, who, because they saw no miracles cognizable by the senses before them, were not willing to believe in the operation of the Holy Spirit, which they had not experienced in their own souls, Chrysostom exhibited the proofs of the continued operation of the Holy Spirit, without which the Pentecostal festival would have been for Christians unintelligible, dead, and insignificant. "Without the Holy Spirit," he says, "there is no forgiveness of sins—without the Holy Spirit we cannot call Jesus our Lord (1 Cor. xii. 3)—without the Holy Spirit, who is the spirit of adoption, we cannot call upon God as our Father. If, therefore, thou callest God thy Father, remember that thou art worthy to address him by this name, because the Holy Ghost has moved thy soul. If there were no Holy Spirit, there would be no gifts to speak of wisdom, and no gifts to speak of knowledge in the church. (1 Cor. xii.) If there were no Holy Spirit, there would be no shepherds and teachers in the church. No Holy Supper could be held; for although man is used as an instrument, everything depends on the agency of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit were not present, the church would not exist. But if the church exists, it is a proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit." Augustin preached in a similar strain at Whitsuntide: "My brethren, will the Holy Spirit now not grant us anything? He who says so, is not worthy to receive anything. If you wish to receive the Holy Spirit, then pay attention. What does the soul do in the body? It animates all the members; it sees through the eyes; it hears through the ears; it speaks through the tongue; it works through the hands; it animates all the members, and imparts to each the power of fulfilling its proper office. There are various offices of individual members; but there is one common life. So it is with the church of God, in which some of the saints work miracles, others publish the truth; in which some preserve a virgin purity, and others live in holy matrimony; some in one way, and some in another. Every one works in his own manner; but all share in the same life. What the soul is to the body, *that* the Holy Spirit is for the body of Christ, the church. What the soul effects in all the members of the same body, *that* the Holy Spirit effects in the whole church."

CHAPTER IX.

BAPTISM—THE HOLY SUPPER—AND CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

In the first age of the church, only adults who entered it consciously and voluntarily, were baptized. But after the first foundation of the church had been laid, and Christian domestic life had been formed, infant baptism was introduced, from a development of the Christian consciousness corresponding to the idea of baptism and of the church. Whoever was born in a Christian family, it was necessarily presupposed that he did not become acquainted with Christianity from the midst of heathenism; that he did not first develop himself from the stand-point of the natural man, and then make his way into a new life, through regeneration, but from the beginning the sanctifying influence of Christian communion must have been shed on the first development of the life of the soul, surrounded as it was with a Christian atmosphere. From the first it must have been trained into communion with Christ—dedicated to him—led to his redeeming grace. Regeneration must have taken place not suddenly, but gradually, allying itself to the first movements of advancing rational life. Thus Irenæus founded infant baptism on the fact that Christ became a child to children, and had sanctified human nature from the first germs of its development.

But in the centuries of which we are now speaking, many things, especially in the Oriental church, opposed the introduction of infant baptism. There were many persons who for a long time had lived thoughtlessly in a middle position between heathenism and Christianity, who remained in the class of catechumens, and could not be induced to receive baptism, except by some alarming event in the course of their lives. Many acted thus, that meanwhile they might more freely indulge their lusts, in the false confidence of which we have already spoken, that if they received baptism on the

near approach of death, however faulty their lives had been up to that time, they would at once be purified, and enter into eternal life. It is evident that in such cases the delay of baptism arose from a preponderance of the heathenish element, and from a defect in Christian domestic life, upon which it must have injuriously reacted.

But many pious parents, owing to a misapprehension, were afraid to trust what was of the highest value, and which might so easily be lost, to the weakness of the child, who had to pass through a development as yet uncertain. Gregory Nazianzen, in an exhortation on infant baptism, says: "Thou hast a child. Let not evil gain any time. From the beginning let it be sanctified; let it be dedicated to the Holy Spirit. Thou art afraid of the seal of baptism on account of the weakness of nature, like a narrow-hearted, distrustful mother. Hannah vowed to devote her son to God, even before he was born; she treated him as a priest, and brought him up in a priestly dress, because she was not afraid of what was human, but trusted in God." In the church of Antioch a prayer was offered up for the catechumens who had been prepared for baptism, which was designed to arouse them to a consciousness of what was essentially necessary for them, and to excite a longing after the divine light, without which they could understand nothing of divine truth. The prayer was to this effect: that "the all-merciful God would hear their prayers; that he would open the eyes of their hearts; that they might understand what no eye had seen, and no ear had heard; that he would instruct them in the words of truth; that he would sow the fear of God in their hearts, and confirm their souls in the truth of his word; that he would reveal to them the gospel of righteousness; that he would grant them a godly disposition, a sound understanding, and a virtuous course of life; so that at all times they might think and act according to God's will—might dwell day and night in the law of God; that he would redeem them from every kind of evil, from all devilish sins, and all temptations of the Wicked One; that he would grant them, at the right time, regeneration, the forgiveness of sins, the garment of a divine life raised above all death; that he would bless their going out and coming in, their families, their domestics; that he would increase their children, bless them, lead them to maturity, and make them

wise; that he would cause everything that awaited them to be for their good." While this prayer was offered, the catechumens knelt down; they were then called to stand up, and to pray themselves "for the angel of peace: peace for everything that might await them; peace for the present day, and peace for all the days of their lives, and for a Christian end." The injunction ended with, "Commend yourselves to the living God, and to his Christ."*

As the regeneration symbolically represented and mediated by baptism, the being born of the Spirit, without which no one born of flesh can enter the kingdom of heaven, must be distinguished from it; so must the spiritual participation of the Holy Supper be distinguished from its bodily participation, in reference to the former of which Christ calls himself the bread that came down from heaven—the bread of life—and says in the same connection: "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." This spiritual participation, which is confined to no special time, but pervades the whole life of a Christian, must be continually renewed, as the Christian is always impelled to turn afresh from himself to his Redeemer, and to seek his life in him. Of such a spiritual participation of the Supper, Augustin says: "The first resurrection is that which takes place in the inner man during the present life, in which he believes, and passes from death unto life. That bread of the inner man presupposes hunger. Hence Christ says: 'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.' But the Apostle Paul says, that 'Christ is made unto us righteousness.' (1 Cor. i. 30.) Whoever, therefore, hungers after this bread, he hungers after righteousness, but after that righteousness which comes down from heaven—the righteousness which God gives, not that which he makes himself. To believe in him is to eat the living bread. Whoever believes, eats; he is satisfied in an invisible manner, because he is regenerated in an invisible manner; he is renewed inwardly; where he is renewed, there he is satisfied. Give me a man who feels this longing and hunger, a wanderer in this desert, who thirsts and who sighs after the

* Neander's General History, vol. iii. p. 456. Standard Library Edition. [Tr.]

fountain of his eternal fatherland. Give me such a man, and he will understand my meaning. But if I speak to one who is cold and indifferent, he understands not what I say. Christ says (John vi. 47): 'He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.' He meant to reveal what he was; for he could in a word say: 'Whoever believeth hath me;' for Christ himself is the true God and eternal life. Whoever believes in me, he therefore said, passes into me; and whoever passes into me, *has* me. But what is it to have me? It is, to have eternal life. Whoever wishes to live, knows where he can find life; whence he can draw life. He comes, he believes, he is incorporated with Christ; he is made alive. But he who belongs to the body of Christ, lives by the Spirit of Christ." All enlightened Christians must agree in this, that the outward participation of the Holy Supper can be of no advantage without that internal spiritual participation. On the words, "This is the bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die," Augustin says: "This is applicable to the inward power and meaning of the sacrament, not to the outward visible signs. It is to be applied to that which is internal, not to that which is merely external; to that which is enjoyed with the heart, not to that which is enjoyed merely with the mouth."

Though in reference to the necessity of that continued spiritual communion no controversy could arise among genuine Christians; yet, on the other hand, opinions differed respecting the greater or less frequency of the outward participation of the Holy Supper. Some thought that as the Christian must live in daily fellowship with the Redeemer, he required all daily outward fellowship with him by means of the communion, and that he must attain the former through the latter. Others thought that the Christian ought to venture only after special preparation, a collectedness of mind before God, and examination of his life and faith (which, indeed, if every thing were as it should be, must be daily continued through the whole of life), and (since amidst the business of the world he could not partake of it daily), at special times to partake of the communion. The first view prevailed in the Oriental church, the second in the Western, Augustin thus gives his opinion on this difference: "Perhaps those persons decided the controversy most correctly who

advised, that before all things they should cultivate Christian union; that every one should do that which, according to his belief, and with a devout mind, he considered ought to be done. For neither of the two parties were wanting in reverence towards the body and blood of the Lord; on the contrary, they vied with each other how they might show him the greatest reverence. For Zaccheus and the Centurion did not quarrel with one another, and neither of them preferred himself to the other, though the one joyfully received the Lord into his house, and the other said: 'Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof.' Both honoured the Saviour, though in different and almost opposite ways. Both were unhappy in their sins, and both obtained mercy."

Meanwhile, even many in the Oriental church came but seldom, perhaps only once a year, at one of the principal festivals, to the communion, not from a conscientious reverence for the body of the Lord, nor bowed down by a sense of their own unworthiness, but from indifference to sacred things, and to the state of their own souls; those nominal Christians of whom we have spoken. And when such persons came only once a year at Easter to the communion, they were not better prepared, or believed that they were sufficiently prepared, by a stricter manner of living during the fast; without coming with those sincere feelings of repentance, and of renewed cordial surrender to Him with whom they were to unite themselves more closely by the communion. Had they made such a preparation, the blessed effects of the holy ordinance would have been manifested in their subsequent life, from what actually happened. Chrysostom says:* "Many partook of the Holy Supper only once a year, sometimes twice; others more frequently. I speak to all, not only to those who are here, but to those who dwell in deserts (the hermits); for these take the Supper only once a year, and often only twice in two years. How now? Which among all shall we allow

* Τί οὖν; τίνας ἀποδεξόμεθα; τοὺς ἅπαξ (τῆς θυσίας μεταλαμβάνοντας τοῦ παντὸς ἐνιαυτοῦ); τοὺς πολλάκις; τοὺς ὀλιγάκις; Οὔτε τοὺς ἅπαξ, οὔτε τοὺς πολλάκις, οὔτε τοὺς ὀλιγάκις, ἀλλὰ τοὺς μετὰ καθαρᾶς καρδίας, τους μετὰ βιου ἀλήπτου. Οἱ τοιοῦτοι ἀεὶ προσίτωσαν. Οἱ δὲ μὴ τοιοῦτοι, μηδὲ ἅπαξ. Τί δηποτε; Ὅτι κρίμα ἑαυτοῖς λαμβάνουσι.—Chrysost. *in Hebr.* 17, § 4.

to be right? In and for itself, neither those who only take it once a year, nor those who take it more frequently, nor those who take it seldomer; but those who come with pure consciences, pure hearts, and holy lives. Such persons might communicate at any time—those who are differently minded, not at all; for they would only do it to their own condemnation.. Tell me, I pray thee, if thou comest at the expiration of a year to the Holy Sacrament, dost thou believe that forty days are sufficient to purify thy sins for the whole time? And when a week has passed away, dost thou betake thyself again to thy former life? Tell me then, if after a long illness thou art well for forty days, and then betakest thyself to thy former unhealthy diet, will not all thy former abstinence be in vain?"

In the liturgical celebration of the Supper, every thing was properly arranged to impress the hearts of all with the design of the holy rite, the more intimate union of believers with the Redeemer as members of one body, and to excite in them the spirit of love, and a longing after heavenly things. The brotherly kiss which preceded the celebration of the Supper; the appeal which was made to all present, "Has any one ought against another? Is no one here with a hypocritical disposition?" Then follows the call of the bishop, "Lift up your hearts!" to which the congregation reply: "We have lifted them to the Lord!" The few but pregnant words of the bishop before the distribution of the elements,—"The holy to the holy!"—signified the holy could only be received with a holy disposition, and called every one to self-examination; for then the congregation answered, in order to show that no man could be esteemed holy,—that only one was holy, by communion with whom all must be made holy,—"One is holy, one Lord, one Jesus Christ." Augustin explains this liturgy, in a sermon to the newly baptized, in the following manner: "After the prayer, you are first of all exhorted to lift your heart above. Thus it becomes the members of Christ. For if you have become members of Christ, you must know where your Head is. The members have a head. If the Head had not gone before, the members would not follow. Whither has your Head risen? What have you expressed in your confessions of faith? 'On the third day he rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.' Therefore, our Head is in heaven. On

this account you respond to the call, 'Lift your heart above,' by saying, 'It is above with the Lord.' And that you may not ascribe this,—that your heart is above with the Lord,—to your own powers, your own merits, your own exertions, since to have the heart above is the gift of God, the bishop begins to speak and says: 'Let us thank God, our Lord, for this, namely, that we have our heart above, since if he had not granted it, our heart would have been detained on earth. And you attest this, since you say: 'It is fair and right that we should thank Him who has granted us to have our heart above with our Head.' After the consecration we repeat the Lord's Prayer as a sign that we should devote ourselves as a sacrifice to the Lord. Then it is said: 'Peace be with you,' and the Christians give one another the holy kiss of brotherly love. It is the sign of peace. What is here outwardly represented, takes place inwardly in your hearts; that is, as thy lips touch the lips of thy brother, so thy heart touches his heart. Here most holy things appear. The outward signs are transitory, but what they represent is unchangeable. Receive them with the recollection that you regard yourselves as members of the body of Christ, that you are united to him in heart, that your heart is always above. Let your hope be not on earth, but in heaven; let your faith be firm in God, for what you do not now see and yet believe, ye shall hereafter behold, when your joy shall have no end."

If the hearing and joining in that beautiful liturgy, so expressive of the deep devotional spirit of Christian antiquity, had not become with many a mere mechanical act, Chrysostom would not so often have been obliged to lament the unworthy participation of the Holy Supper, or the want of stillness and devotion during its celebration. On this account those great fathers of the church, Augustin and Chrysostom, laboured to unfold the internal meaning of these words and usages, and to impress them on the minds of men. The word of an enlightened teacher, that comes loving and continually fresh from the inner life, and applies itself to the constant wants of the church among whom he lives; however glorious it is in and for itself, is always in danger of relapsing into a stationary dead form, and requires to be perpetually renewed. Chrysostom laments that so little was shown in the lives of Christians of that brotherly communion which ought to have

been kept continually alive by the celebration of the Supper, which connected the members with their Head and with one another. In a sermon on 1 Cor. xi. 20–27, he says: "Thou hast partaken of the blood of the Lord, and yet thou knowest not thy brother. If thou wert not willing to know him before, thou oughtest at least to recognise him when he appeared with thee at the same sacred table. Dost thou not bethink thyself of what thou art by nature, and what thou hast become? Dost thou not recollect that thou wert far poorer in good works than this poor man in money, so full of sins, and yet God has freed thee from all these, and conferred on thee the honour of being at such a table. May we all hearken to this who are here assembled with the poor at the holy table, and who, when we go away, conduct ourselves towards them as if we had never seen them." Looking back with sorrow on the times of primitive brotherly love, he says: "An individual excluded from church-communion was like a limb separated from the rest of the body. And why was this then so shocking? Because the being united with Christian brethren was esteemed a great blessing. For at that time they dwelt in every church as if they dwelt in the same house, under the superintendence of the same Father, and taking their food at the same table. How great, then, was the evil, to be estranged from such love? But now this appears as of no importance, because it is esteemed of no importance for us to meet together in communion."

What could be effected for the advancement of the higher life, by means of mutual excitement, is beautifully depicted by Augustin in the following passage:* "In heaven is the everlasting Jerusalem, where our fellow-citizens, the angels, are; we are now separated from our fellow-citizens, as strangers upon earth. As strangers we sigh; in our fatherland we shall be happy. But we meet with companions in this our pilgrimage, who already have seen the fatherland itself, and call upon us to hasten thither. My brethren, recollect how, when the feast of the martyr was celebrated, to whose memory this church is dedicated, a multitude of persons streamed together, how they mutually aroused and encouraged

* Sed est in cœlo æterna Jerusalem, ubi sunt cives nostri angeli; ab ipsis civibus nostris peregrinamur in terra. In perigrinatione suspiramus, in civitate gaudebimus.—August. *in Psa.* cxxxi. § 2.

one another. 'Let us go on!' they cried, 'Let us go on!' Some asked, 'Whither must we go?' and the other answered, 'To that place, that holy place.' They responded to one another, and as the ardour of each one was kindled, they formed together a common flame, and this one flame formed by the mutual discourse of those who thus caught fire from each other, carried them along to the holy place, and communicated the emotions of piety to all. If their holy love can so carry men on to earthly places, of what power must that love be which carries men associated with one another to heaven, and makes them exclaim, 'Let us go up to the house of the Lord! Let us run and not be weary, since we shall at last arrive where no weariness is felt."

CHAPTER X.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIP.

What we call friendship, that inward contact and communion between souls which reciprocally attract and immediately understand one another, ought from the very nature of brotherly love to become an universal bond of humanity. The one life of Christ which communicates itself to all, in which all who share it reciprocally attract, feel, and understand in unison, forms the fundamental element of this spiritual union. But this does not exclude a more limited friendship between individual members of the body of Christ, which by virtue of the peculiarities adapted by the Creator, from whom proceeds that mysterious attraction implanted in the soul, joins and connects them together. As Christianity, with that higher unity which it everywhere created by allowing all to become one in Christ, did not abolish the variety of peculiarities founded on the natural dispositions implanted at the original creation—but united them to one another by means of that higher unity, appropriating to as many various forms of the new spirit—transformed, sanctified, and glorified them; so also it must receive into itself and

fill with a new animation that peculiar relation which was based on the original reference of peculiarities to one another, Since it first of all unfolded the undeveloped germ of mental peculiarity; since it brought into consciousness a world hitherto concealed from man in the depths of his soul, which was now first laid open, it must also bring forward new, higher, and deeper points of contact between these worlds now laid open to a more developed and transformed mental peculiarity. If in the life everlasting, a more intimate and immediate contact and communication take place between persons that will no longer see things though a glass darkly, but know each other's peculiarities as they are known, Christianity in this respect forms the transition-point between time and eternity, a foretaste of eternal life! Two redeemed souls who attach themselves more closely to one another, impelled by a close relationship, sanctified by the Spirit of the Lord, form a church, in the midst of which the Lord has promised to be present.

Chrysostom says of true friendship: "If thou namest a thousand treasures to me, none is of so much worth as a genuine friend. Let us first of all say what high joy friendship insures of itself. The communion of souls gives overflowing joy. I speak of genuine friends who are one soul, ready to die for another. Do not suppose, when you think of those persons who are commonly called friends, that what I say is contradicted by such. Whoever has such as a friend as I have described will understand what I say. If he sees him daily, yet that is not enough. He prays on his behalf what he prays for himself. I know one who requested pious men first to pray for his friend and then for himself. So great a blessing is a friend that we love a place and a time on account of our friend. If we often come without friends to the same place, we weep, for we recollect the day on which we there met with our friends. I speak of spiritual friends, our love to whom surpasses all things. Such an one was Paul (1 Thess. ii. 8). Thus we ought to love with glowing hearts. Do not name to me the present time. This with other things, this blessing also has departed from us. Think of the apostolic times; and I will not say, think of the most distinguished, but only of ordinary believers. All were of one heart and of one soul. It was imparted to every one as he had need. There

was then no *meum* and *tuum*. This is friendship when a person does not reckon his own as his own, but as if it belonged to his friend; a friend will not rule or command, but rather be thankful when the other commands him to do anything. He would rather show some kindness to the other than receive kindness from him; for he loves, and feels as if he had rendered no satisfaction to his propensity to love. Friendship conceals its good deeds. The friend would not hold the other as a debtor, but appear himself as a debtor. Friendship is a plant of heaven." The same father says elsewhere:* "Spiritual love is higher than all other love, and is as a queen ruling over her own subjects, and has a shining form: for she is the offspring of nothing earthly, neither intimacy, nor beneficence, nor nature, nor time. But she comes down from above, from heaven. And why dost thou wonder that she does not require beneficence in order to form an union, since she is not disheartened even by ill-treatment?"

As a philosopher (Pascal) has said, "In Jesus Christ all contradictions are reconciled," so Christian friendship could overcome contrarieties, combining opposites in a higher unity. Often, persons of very opposite natural constitutions were so united to each other by the higher spirit which amalgamated their souls in the communion of a higher life, that they reciprocally made up what was wanting in each—the ardent energy of one carried forward the more gentle, and the gentleness of the latter moderated the powerful ardour of the former. Such joining to each other—such a co-operation of persons separated by flesh and blood, but united in the Spirit of the Lord—such a reciprocal supplementing of the gifts of grace has always contributed much to further the work of the Lord: as on the other hand, this work has often been much injured, when, on account of what was humanly different, the unity in spirit was ignored; when those who might have been one in spirit, on account of such differences separated from one another.

* Ἡ δὲ πνευματικὴ ἀγάπη πασῶν ἐστιν ἀνωτέρα, καθάπερ τις βασίλισσα τῶν ἰδίων κρατοῦσα, καὶ λαμπρὸν ἔχει τὸ σχῆμα. Οὐδὲν γὰρ γήϊνον αὐτὴν τίκτει, οὐ συνήθεια, οὐ εὐεργεσία, οὐ φύσις, οὐ χρόνος. Ἀλλ' ἄνωθεν κάτεισιν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Καὶ τί θαυμάζεις, εἰ εὐεργεσίας οὐ δεῖται πρὸς τὸ συνεστάναι, ὅπου γε οὐδὲ τῷ κακῶς παθεῖν ἀνατρέπεται.—Chrysost. *in Col.* 1, § 3.

In the relation first described stood Augustin and Alypius to one another. The latter, a man distinguished from early life by his noble striving, was a neighbour of Augustin, and perhaps a few years younger. It happened that when Augustin delivered lectures on rhetoric at Carthage, Alypius on one occasion came into the lecture-room, and heard him ridicule the passion for the circus and the theatre. Alypius was deeply infected by this passion in the great city. Though Augustin had not thought of him in what he had said, Alypius took it home to himself. He was brought to reflection, acknowledged his obligations to Augustin, and became his most intimate friend. He was carried away by his ardour. At first he was in error, and Alypius became a Manichean. He followed his friend to Italy, and from Manicheism passed over with him to Scepticism and to Platonism. And in the last great crisis in the inner life of Augustin, Alypius quietly and gently adhered to him. When Augustin applied to himself, Rom. xiii. 14 ("Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof"), Alypius referred the following verse in the next chapter ("Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye,") to his own relation to Augustin. Alypius had not so much to combat; but he could not so easily attain a decisive victory, as Augustin, and surrender his heart and life so wholly and unreservedly to the Redeemer; he could not make up his mind to become a fool to the world, in order to find wisdom in Christ crucified; hence he thought, for example, that in scientific writings a man might speak in the language of philosophers and be silent about Christ. Thus matters stood with him, when Augustin's ardent faith at last carried him away; so that Augustin called him a brother of his heart. When, from the idea of a platonic, philosophic association, which Augustin had planned in his platonic enthusiasm, a spiritual association had been formed, which Augustin, after his return, founded in his native city, Alypius became a member of it. Thus the friendship begun in the flesh was perfected in the spirit. Alypius afterwards co-operated with Augustin as one of the most zealous and worthy bishops of the Numidian church.

Such also was the relation between Basil of Cæsarea and Gregory Nazianzen. The former, by nature powerful, ardent

—more disposed to vigorous outward activity—stood in need of such a friend, who on many occasions moderated his zeal, and cautioned him against the admixture of a strange, earthly fire. Gregory, on the other hand, was more inclined to the quiet repose of contemplation, and to be averse from outward activity; he therefore required a friend who would draw him out from his repose, when the interests of the church demanded it, and impel him, by sacrificing his inclinations, to put out his talents to interest by external activity.

At Athens, whither at that time the youth desirous of learning resorted from all parts of the Roman empire, they laid the foundation of a friendship when youths, arising from fellowship in the Christian life and in philosophic pursuits, which was important for the whole of their future lives and labours. The Christianity implanted in their minds by early education united them more closely, because they were obliged to defend their faith against the heathenism which was there predominant, and which the teachers of the place sought to promote in every possible way by an ostentatious eloquence, and a mystical, plausible philosophy, which was attractive to young inexperienced minds, and which at that time had a secret support in the young and promising imperial prince, Julian, to whom all eyes were directed. The studious Christian youth gathered round the two friends, in whom they beheld bright examples of faith and practice. "There were for us," says Gregory, "only two ways known: the way to the church and the teachers of the church; and the way to the teachers of the sciences. As to other things, festivals, the theatres, noisy assemblies, and banquets, we left them to those who liked them. Others bore distinguished names derived from their ancestors; for us, the great concern and most valued reputation was to be and to be called Christians. Nothing was to us so important as to be raised to God by and with one another."

At Athens they laid down a plan for the whole of their future lives, as it was their wish never to separate from one another, but to be associated in seeking God and investigating truth; the plan, however, which these youths sketched, was frustrated by Providence, which called them to different outward relations and spheres of action. Basil lived in the retirement of Pontus, at the head of a religious society, while

Gregory, whom he had invited thither, was obliged to remain at Nazianzus, in order to take care of his parents. "I allow," he wrote to Basil, in answer to his reproaches, "I have not kept the promise I made at Athens to live with you, and to pursue our studies together; but it is against my inclination, since the law which commands me to take care of my parents outweighs the law of friendship." Yet afterwards Gregory was able to spend some time with him in that religious society, and often looked back with fond remembrance on those days of happy intercourse. "Who will give me again," he writes, "those Christian hymns, those risings of the soul to God in prayer, that almost super-earthly life, that heart-communion with the brethren who were carried by thee to God, the associated study of Holy Writ, and the light we found in it under the guidance of the Holy Spirit." Gregory often received fresh consolation and encouragement by taking refuge from the vexations of his lot in the heart of his friend. When a dispute arose between Basil, as a presbyter, and his bishop, Gregory declined the honour which this bishop wished to show him, and wrote to him, that "to honour him, and insult his friend, was just as if a man would tear up the foundations of a house, and at the same time decorate the walls." But he also advised his friend to sacrifice his own feelings to the law of Christian love, and to the good of the church; and he gave himself no rest till he reconciled these two ecclesiastics, to the great advantage of the church. Frankly, but in general with a mild forbearance, he censured his friend, if he observed anything inconsistent in his behaviour; he admonished him not to let adverse circumstances mislead him to do anything unworthy of Christian wisdom. Even a sudden error committed by Basil could not break the bond which united them in spirit. Gregory, who had once known the work of God in his friend's soul, and had become one with him in the Lord—who carried in his own heart that which was the animating principle of his friend—did not allow himself to be prevented by what still remained of the old man from recognizing the man of the Spirit, and he cast a veil over the faults of his friend in the spirit of love. Whoever knows himself rightly will not very easily fall into error with respect to others whose higher nature has once been discerned by him. Everywhere there are obscurities which

only faith and love can penetrate. "Love endureth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things," as the apostle says; it continues to believe and hope in the divine original image, even where the appearance, still obscured by sin, stands in contradiction to it.

The mark of Christian friendship ought to be the indissoluble bond of love with the sword of the Spirit, sparing nothing, but wielded by love. Whoever has become one with another in the Lord, and is united with him by the common participation of the divine life, must not let himself be separated by anything which the flesh and the world everywhere strive to mix with God's work. The power of that which unites and holds together must here show itself stronger than everything that tends to separate. Here the words of our Lord hold good: "What God hath joined together, let no man separate." Hence Jerome justly remarks: "The friendship which can cease, was never a true one;" for true friendship is grounded only in that which is divine and eternal, and consequently is as unchangeable as that on which it rests. This divine principle must also here, as in all the branches and relations of life which it animates, evince its purifying and transforming power; two souls who are joined by the Lord, form a temple in which he dwells, and from which he will himself, by their reciprocal co-operation, take away all the impurity that still defiles this temple. As the Christian becomes one with another in the Lord, he must learn clearly to distinguish in the other as well as in himself the two opposing fundamental powers which in this life are found in every man, the power of the flesh, and the power of the spirit, as well as their different works. Only love which honours a human soul in which a life from God is begun, as a sanctuary—only love attracts to itself and draws to a centre all that is divine—only love, which thus exercises its attractive power over the divine that is allied to it, while it exercises a repulsive power against the undivine that is foreign to it—only such love is equal to this task. The hatred which is merely repulsive, and never attractive, must necessarily misunderstand and misapprehend; it inverts the right order of things, since it would form its conceptions of light from shadows, while shadows can only be rightly understood in their relation to light.

But as the Christian cannot excuse nor spare what is evil in himself, but surrenders himself to the primitive spirit of truth, so he acts as the organ of that truth in relation to his friend. It is the greatest service of love that he can show him, to undeceive him when disposed to flatter himself. Hence Augustin justly wrote to the self-seeking, irritable Jerome: "I doubt whether such a friendship can be reckoned a Christian one, to which the common saying—'Obsequiousness makes friends, truth produces hatred,' is more applicable than the proverb of Solomon—'Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.' Hence we would rather inform our friends, who sincerely wish well to our labours, in all ways on this point, in order that they may know how it can happen that among the most intimate friends a contradiction may take place on either side, and yet love not be diminished; and the truth required by friendship, as a debt, produces no hatred, provided the contradiction be agreeable to truth, or of whatever kind what is said may be, if it comes from an upright heart, so that nothing is held in the heart, which the tongue contradicts."

We have remarked above in what terms Jerome speaks of true friendship. Thus, in another place he says: "True friendship which is joined by the bond of Christ, is founded not on worldly advantage, nor deceitful hypocrisy, but on the fear of God and mutual zeal in the study of the Scriptures." But Jerome, alas! did not always correspond in his life to the sentiments so beautifully expressed. The same man who had acquired in a high degree the mastery over sensuality often succumbed to the power of a secret and dangerous egoism, which rendered him practically unfaithful to the truths he expressed. His friendship with Rufinus was of that higher genuine kind, such as described by himself; yet it was broken up by the power of this separating, egoistic element. These two individuals, who had formerly been friends, strove against each other with carnal violence, so that Augustin wrote to Jerome: "When and where must not every man, whoever he may be, be afraid, since to you—at a time in which ye follow the Lord free from the burden of the world, and live together in a land in which the Lord, when he walked on it with human feet, said: 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I

give unto you;' and you are men of riper years, who have studied the word of God together—since to you, I say, such things can happen? Truly, must not man be continually in a state of warfare on earth. (Job vii. 1.) Alas! that I can never meet with you both together. Probably, as I am moved and penetrated with sorrow and fear, I should fall down at your feet; I should weep to the utmost; I should beseech you with all possible love. Sometimes I should beseech each of you separately for himself, sometimes each one for the other, and especially for the weak, for whom Christ died, who have seen you to their great peril on the theatre of this life, that you would not scatter such things in your writings respecting one another, which, hereafter, you who now are not disposed to be reconciled—if ye should be reconciled—would not be able to obliterate, or which you would then be afraid to read, lest you should renew the controversy with one another."

CHAPTER XI.

THE VARIOUS CALLINGS AMONG CHRISTIANS.

We have seen that in the first ages, the opinions of Christians, whether it was allowable for a Christian to fill a civil office, or to serve in the army, were divided. At a later period, the general voice of the church decided in the affirmative. Only separatists thought otherwise, such as probably the Novatians and Donatists, whose convictions, as far as they proceeded from Christian love, and aimed at reaching the ideal of the Christian life, although in part founded on a misconception, were deserving of respect and forbearance. Ambrose satisfied a Christian judge, who had been troubled with conscientious scruples respecting the exercise of his office, by appealing to Rom. xiii. 4. We recognise the new ideas respecting the importance of human life that were spread by Christianity, the power of love extending itself to those who had fallen however low, when many judges who in their office had been

obliged to pass sentence of death, were held back by a certain feeling from approaching the body of the Lord who died for all sinners, at the love-feast. Yet the church did not consider herself warranted to refuse communion to a person who discharged a function committed to him by God, and founded on the law of God.

Against those heathens who blamed Christianity for all the corruption of the Roman empire at that time, Augustin says:* "Let those who assert that the doctrine of Christ is opposed to the well-being of the state give us an army of such men as the doctrine of Christ enjoins soldiers to be. Let them give us such citizens, such husbands, such wives, such parents, such masters, such servants, such kings, such judges; lastly, such payers and receivers of the public revenues, as Christianity requires, and we shall see whether they will then venture to say that Christianity is injurious to the state; whether they must not rather admit that this religion, when it is obeyed, is a great safeguard to the state." Against those who, from a literal interpretation of passages in the sermon on the mount (Matt. v. 39; Luke vi. 29), believed they must infer that the discharge of civil offices and military service were inconsistent with Christianity; the same writer says: "These precepts relate rather to the internal disposition than to the outward act; let patience and love abide constantly in the interior of the soul, but in reference to the outward act let that be done which appears most useful for those we love in heart." This appears plainly from the example of the Lord Jesus, that extraordinary example of patience, who, when he was smitten on the cheek, said: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?" He therefore did not fulfil his own precept, if we merely take it according to the letter, for he did not present the other cheek, but rather prevented the person who had committed an unjust

* Proinde qui doctrinam Christi adversam dicunt esse reipublicæ, dent exercitum talem quales doctrina Christi esse milites jussit, dent tales provinciales, tales maritos, tales conjuges, tales parentes, tales filios, tales dominos, tales servos, tales reges, tales judices, tales denique debitorum ipsius fisci redditores et exactores, quales esse præcepit doctrina Christiana, et audeant eam dicere adversam esse reipublicæ immo vero non dubitent eam confiteri magnam, si obtemperetur, salutem esse reipublicæ. — August. *Epist.* 138, *ad Marcellinum.*

act from a repetition of it; and yet he was ready, not only to let himself be smitten in the face, but to die on the cross for those from whom he met with such treatment; for whom, indeed, he prayed on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Therefore we must always have love in our inward disposition, so that we should not wish to return evil for evil; yet outwardly we must do many things in which we shall rather consult the true interests of men than their inclination, as a father when he chastises his son, even sharply, does not, certainly, lose his parental affection. And if, therefore, an earthly state observes the precepts of Christianity, war itself will not be carried on without love, in order to lead back the conquered so much more easily to peaceful intercourse, founded upon what is good and equitable; for he who loves the liberty of doing evil, is conquered for his own best interests—for nothing is more unfortunate than the good fortune of the vicious, by which impunity, which is the greatest punishment, is secured, and the evil will, as an internal enemy, is strengthened. If Christianity condemned all war as sinful, then the soldiers, when they asked advice concerning salvation, should rather have been told to throw away their arms, and to abandon military service; but they were told, "Do violence to no man, and be content with your wages." "Not the military profession," says Augustin in another passage, where he quotes the same words, in his 302nd sermon; "but an evil disposition in that profession, prevents from doing good. Oh that soldiers, that we ourselves, would hearken to what Christ enjoins; there is one Christ for them and for us. May we all listen to him, and live in harmony and peace." To a general, Boniface, who had requested Augustin to give him directions how to lead a Christian life in his vocation, he wrote: "Do not believe that no one bearing arms can lead a life well-pleasing to God. The holy David bore arms, to whom the Lord gave so strong a testimony, and so did most of the good men of that age. The centurion bore arms. (Matt. viii. 8.) To the same class also belonged Cornelius, to whom the angel was sent, and to whom he said: 'Thy prayers and thy alms are come up for a memorial before God;' when he told him to send for the Apostle Peter, and learn from him what he was to do; and who sent 'a devout soldier of them that waited on him,' to request

that apostle to visit him. Reflect, first of all, when thou armest thyself for battle, that thy heroic spirit itself is a gift of God. So wilt thou guard against using God's gifts contrary to God's will. Thou must always wish for peace, and only engage in war as a matter of necessity, that God may free thee from that trouble, and maintain peace. Even in war be peacefully disposed, in order to bring back those who are conquered by thee to a peace that will be beneficial, even to themselves. Let chastity and moderation adorn thy demeanour; for it is a shame that the power of unlawful desires should vanquish him whom no human power can vanquish. If earthly riches are wanting to thee, seek for thyself such as are not to be gained by wicked works, and belong to this world; but if thou possessest such, seek to retain them for heaven by good works. Brave and Christian souls are not puffed up by worldly riches when they fall to their lot, nor are they disheartened by the loss of them. Let us rather think of our Lord's words: 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also!' And if we understand the call (made at the celebration of the Supper), to have our hearts above, we must not answer thee with falsehood. If, when reading this epistle of the Holy Scriptures, thou art made aware that thou art defective in this or the other point of the Christian life, seek to gain it by strenuous effort and prayer. Thank God for what thou hast, as the source of good from whom thou hast it; and in all the good thou doest, glorify him and humble thyself, as it is written, 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.' But however far may be thy progress in the love of God, and of thy neighbour, and in true piety, never expect, as long as thou walkest on earth, to be without sin; for of this life on earth we read in the Holy Scriptures (Job vii. 1), "Is there not a warfare to man on earth?" Therefore as long as thou livest in the body thou must use the prayer which the Lord has taught us, 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;' be ready thus to forgive quickly, if any one has committed an offence against thee, and seek forgiveness for thyself, that thou mayest be able to pray with uprightness." When Boniface, at that time one of the greatest generals in the Roman empire, was dejected by the death of a much-loved pious wife, and had thoughts of becom-

ing a monk, Augustin dissuaded him from it, and represented to him, "how much he could benefit the church in the calling that was entrusted to him by God, provided he exercised it according to the divine will, since he defended the Christians against the barbarians, so that they could lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, and that while bearing carnal weapons he could gain the stronger and surer protection of spiritual weapons."

But afterwards, when through various intrigues, dissension was sown between this great general and the Roman government, which he had served so long and so successfully, and when on account of the unjust treatment he received he was induced to join a rebellion which opened the north of Africa to the Vandals, and occasioned great trouble to that part of the world, Augustin wrote him an epistle of exhortation and warning to recall him to his duty. "I wish to say something to you, not for the purpose of maintaining your power, and the honour with which you are invested in this evil world; nor for your temporal welfare, which is a transitory and uncertain thing; but something which may contribute to the attainment of that salvation which Christ has promised us, who on that account suffered shame here below, and was crucified, in order to teach us that we should rather despise than love the good things of this world, but should make that the object of our love and hope which he has placed before us in his resurrection. I know, indeed, that there are not wanting persons who wish thy advantage in reference to the life of this world, and would give thee counsel relating to it, both good and bad, since they are men, and can only give their advice according to present appearances, without knowing what may happen on the next day. But a person does not easily give thee counsel, that thy soul may not lose eternal life; not that persons are wanting who could do this, but they can hardly find a moment to speak to thee respecting it. For I have always been anxious to do it, and yet have never found time and place to lay before thee what I feel that I am bound to lay before a man whom I so much love in Christ. Hear me, then; yea, hear the Lord our God, who speaks to thee through the instrumentality of my weakness. Recollect thy state of mind when thy first wife was still living, and soon after her death how thou wert disgusted with the vanity

of this world, and how thou longedst to serve God alone. I know what thou then saidst to me concerning the state of thy soul and thy resolutions. I and brother Alypius were both alone with thee. I believe that the earthly anxieties that now occupy thee have yet not so much power over thee as to efface this altogether from thy remembrance. Then thou wert desirous of giving up all thy public business, and of retiring into the quiet of a monk's life, devoted to God." He then reminds him how he was held back from taking such a step by his remonstrances. He next speaks of the alteration that had come over him since his second marriage, and into what transactions he had allowed himself to be hurried. He then says to him: "Thou art a Christian, thou art an intelligent man, thou fearest God; bethink thyself of what I cannot speak, and thou wilt thyself acknowledge how much evil thou hast to repent of, and I believe that to give thee time for repentance, the Lord spares thee and rescues thee from all dangers, in order that thou mayest repent in a right manner; and when thou hearest what is written in Sirach v. 8, ('Set not thy heart upon goods unjustly gotten, for they shall not profit thee in the day of calamity,') delay not to turn to the Lord, and put it not off to another day. Thou thinkest indeed that thou hast a righteous cause, and of that I cannot judge, since I am not in a condition to hear both sides; but however it may be with thy cause, into the examination of which we need not further enter, canst thou in the sight of God deny, that thou wouldst not have been brought into these difficulties if thou hadst not loved the good things of this world, which as a servant of God, as I knew thee in former times, thou shouldst have esteemed as nothing, which, indeed, thou mightest accept, if presented to thee, in order to use them in a pious manner; but if they were denied thee, thou shouldst not seek after them in such a manner as to plunge thyself into this danger where, if things that are truly good are loved, real evil will be the result, little, indeed, by thyself, but much on thy account; and if that is feared which if it injures, injures only for a short time, yet what is done will injure for ever. I will only adduce one thing. Who does not see that to defend thy power or thy security many men are connected with thee, who if they are all faithful to thee, and thou hast no need to fear plots from them, yet they only

seek to obtain worldly advantages through you? And thus thou, who oughtest to control thy own desires, art obliged to satisfy the desires of others. To attain this object, much that is displeasing to God must take place, and yet such desires will not be satisfied; for it is easier to deny these altogether in the case of those who love God, than to satisfy them for those who love the world." After representing to him this great misfortune, that he to whom north Africa formerly owed its deliverance had now invaded it, he went on to say: "But thou wilt perhaps answer that the blame rests on those who have not rewarded thy services as they deserve, but recompensed them with evil. On this matter I cannot decide; but do thou rather look to thy own case, which thou hast not to settle with any man, but with God; since thou art living a believer in Christ, thy fear should be lest thou shouldst offend Him. Look to God,—contemplate Christ, who has bestowed such great blessings on us, and endured such great sufferings for us. Whoever would attain to his kingdom, and live with him and under him happy through eternity, loves his enemies, does good to them that hate him, and prays for his persecutors. If, therefore, good, although earthly and transitory, accrued to thee from the Roman government—(for as to its being earthly, not heavenly, only that can be given over which the giver has power)—do not wish to recompense good with evil. But if thou hast received evil, wish not to recompense evil with evil. What there may be of either good or evil I will leave unexamined: I am speaking to a Christian; as such, wish neither to return good with evil, nor evil with evil. Thou wilt perhaps ask me, what must I do then in such great trouble? If thou askest my advice about thy earthly welfare, I know not how to answer thee. No certain counsel can be given about the uncertain. But if thou desirest counsel in what relates to God, respecting the salvation of thy soul, and if thou fearest the words of truth, 'What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' (Luke ix. 25), I know how to give thee counsel." He points him to 1 John ii. 15, and adds: "See here my counsel; take it and use it. Here let it be seen whether thou art a brave man; conquer the desires of the love of the world; repent of the evil thou hast done, when, overcome by these desires, thou allowedst thyself to be hurried away to

desire what was not just. "But," he continues, "perhaps thou askest me again how thou must effect this when once involved in such great worldly trouble. Persevere in prayer, and address God in the words of Psalm xxv. 17: 'O bring thou me out of my distresses.' Thy distress will be at an end when these desires are overcome. He who heard thee, and us for thee, so that thou wast redeemed from so many and such great dangers which threatened thee on the side of visible, bodily enemies, he will also hear thee that thou mayest be able to conquer internal and invisible enemies."

Ferrandus, a deacon of Carthage, at the beginning of the sixth century, gave to an imperial general and governor, the Count Regino, the following seven rules for leading a Christian life in his vocation:—"(1.) Be convinced that in every action the help of divine grace is necessary for you, and say with the apostle, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' (2.) Let your life be a mirror in which your soldiers may see what they have to do. (3.) Aim not to rule, but to be useful. (4.) Love your native country as yourself. (5.) Let what relates to God be of more value to you than anything human." In explaining this rule, he adds, "Be earnest in prayer. Although business presses upon you on all sides, let the flame of a holy longing impel you to the reading of the Scriptures." "(6.) Be not too rigid in administering justice [*i.e.* to the injury of Christian love and mercy]. (7.) Bear in mind that you are a Christian."

Augustin thus addresses a judge: "Man sits in judgment on man, on his equal; a sinner on a sinner. When those words of the Lord are repeated, 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her,' does not every earthly judge tremble? First of all, judge yourself, and then from the hidden ground of your conscience go forth to judge others with safety. We have two different names—*man* and *sinner*. God created man: man made himself a sinner. Let what man has made be destroyed; but let the work of God be set free: as man, retain love to man in your heart, and be an earthly judge. Although you must be feared, yet love. Let your anger fall on that which displeases you in yourself; not against him who is created as you are. Punish: I do not forbid thee; but with a loving disposition, with the wish to amend."

Gregory Nazianzen said to a governor of his native country, who was embittered against his fellow-citizens: "You are an image of God, and you govern over God's image, which indeed is ruled by you here below, but passes into another life, into which we shall all pass after the short scene of this mortal life. Reflect whose creature you are, whither you are called, how much you have received, how much you are indebted. Imitate therefore God's love to man. To do good is the divinest thing belonging to man." On a festive occasion he delivered an exhortation to the various classes in the capital of the eastern Roman Empire: "Emperor! honour your purple, for even the lawgiver has a lawgiver over him—Reason. Acknowledge how much is entrusted to you. We believe as it is written (Prov. xxi. 1), that the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord: let your strength be there; not in gold nor in armies. And you who surround the throne, be not lifted up on account of your power, and do not regard the transitory as something eternal. Remain faithful to the emperor, but first of all be faithful to God, and for his sake to those whom he has set over you. You, who boast of your nobility, acquire true nobility of disposition." Such a statesman, in whose esteem the cause of God stood highest, was the emperor's secretary, Benevolus. When the Empress Justina commanded him to make a law by which a doctrine would be rendered predominant which he held to be irreconcilable with faith in the divinity of Christ, he excused himself from the task. The empress offered him great honours, but he, who had only God before his eyes, preferred laying down at her feet the insignia of his office.

Chrysostom also called upon the artizans to meditate on the word of God; and in reference to this subject says: "Do not imagine that, because you are an artizan, this occupation is foreign to you; for Paul was a tentmaker, and even after his conversion he resumed his trade. Therefore let none of those be ashamed who follow such a trade; but only let those be ashamed who live to no purpose, and are idle. The souls of those who are always at work are purer and stronger; for the idler speaks and does many vain things. But he who labours aright does not easily allow anything useless, either in work, word, or thought, for his soul is always directed to a life of labour." And in his twentieth homily on the first

Epistle to the Corinthians, he says to the higher classes before whom he spoke:* "Do not say that such an one is a cobbler, nor another a dyer, nor a third a brazier; but think of him as a believer and a brother. For we are the disciples of the fishermen, of the publicans, of the tentmakers, of Him who was brought up in the carpenter's house, and was thought worthy to have for his mother the espoused wife of the carpenter, and was laid in swaddling clothes in a manger, and had not where to lay his head. Consider this, and know the nothingness of human pride. Hold the tentmaker for thy brother, as well as him who rides in a chariot with a multitude of slaves going before him. If you honour men for Christ's sake, then must every believer, although the meanest, be honoured by you."

As to the relation of servants to their masters, the former were at that time in the state of slavery, and Christianity, which everywhere began with operating, not on the outward relations and forms of life, but upon the spirit within, and thence brought forth a new creation, left in this case, as we have remarked already, the existing outward relation untouched; but it spread abroad a new spirit by that great utterance, "In Christ there is neither bond nor free." Chrysostom admirably develops the contents of this great doctrine in his exposition of 1 Cor. vii. 22, 23: "In Christ both are are equal, for thy lord as much as thyself is Christ's bondsman. How then can the bondsman be a freeman? Because he has not only freed thee from the servitude of sin, but, although thou remainest a bondsman, from servitude itself. Christianity allows the slave to remain a slave,—this is wonderful! And how can the slave, although he is a slave, be not a slave? If he does all things according to the will of God; if he is no hypocrite, if he does nothing in order to be seen of men—this is to serve men, and yet to be free. Or how can a freeman become a slave? When he serves men in

* *Μὴ γὰρ εἴπῃς, ὅτι ὁ δεῖνα ὑποδηματορράφος, μηδ' ὅτι δευσοποιὸς ἕτερος, μηδ' ὅτι χαλκοτύπος ἄλλος· ἀλλ' ἐννόησον ὅτι πιστὸς καὶ ἀδελφός. Ἐκείνων γὰρ ἐσμὲν μαθηταὶ τῶν ἁλιέων, τῶν τελωνῶν, τῶν σκηνορράφων, ἐκείνου τοῦ τιμαφέντος ἐν οἰκίᾳ τέκτονος, καὶ τὴν μνηστὴν τούτου μητέρα καταξιώσαντος σχεῖν, καὶ ἐκ σπαργάνων ἐπὶ φάτνης κειμένου, καὶ οὐκ ἔχοντος ὅπου κλίνῃ τὴν κεφαλήν.*—Chrysost. *in* 1 *Cor.* v. 20, § 5.

what is evil. This is the true freedom that shines forth even in slavery. This is the peculiarity of Christianity, that it bestows freedom even in slavery."* Christianity also rendered masters sensible of their obligations to their common Master; it taught them to recognize in slaves men in the image of God, for whose salvation, as for their own, Christ died, and it excited them by the fire of love to care for the spiritual and bodily welfare of their brethren. Chrysostom says, in one of his sermons: "Abraham cared for his servants as well as for himself. He said almost like Job, 'Did not He that made me in the womb, make him?' (Job xxxi. 15.) Let us, then, take great care for the improvement of our servants. Let us also instruct our servants in divine things. So shall the whole house be filled with blessing." Appealing to his own experience, Chrysostom says, "I know many families who by the virtue of their servants have gained much [*i. e.* for their souls]." Thus a Christian female, who had been sold as a slave, by her piety and faith laid the foundation for the conversion of the whole population of the Iberians [the modern Georgia].

A Syrian monk, Malchus, in the fourth century, who had been taken captive by a horde of Arabs, and was intrusted with the care of his master's flocks, found his consolation in the Christian faith, and in calling to mind the Holy Scriptures. He says himself: "I appeared to myself to be somewhat like holy Jacob; I recollected Moses; and that both were once shepherds in the desert; I prayed earnestly; I sang the psalms which I had learned in the cloister; I found joy in my captivity, and I was thankful for God's wise guidance. My master could discern no deceit in me, for I knew the Apostle's injunction, that we should serve God faithfully in our masters. (Eph. vi.)"

Augustin protested against treating slaves as things. "The Christian dare not regard a slave as his property, like a horse or silver, although it may happen that a horse fetches a higher price than a slave, and still more an article of furniture made of gold or silver. But when a slave is better educated by thee, or led to the service of God, than he would be by him who wishes to take him from thee, I know not whether any

* Τοιοῦτον ὁ Χριστιανισμὸς, ἐν δουλείᾳ ἐλευθερίαν χαρίζεσθαι.—Chrysost. *in* 1 *Cor.* 19, § 5.

one could venture to say that he may be thought of as little value as a cloak; for man must love his fellow-man as himself, since the Lord requires of him that he should love even his enemies."

Many persons already felt and acknowledged that the relation of slaves, although its pressure would necessarily be relieved by the influence of the spirit of Christian love, was at variance with the general rights of man as called forth into clearer consciousness by Christianity—since man, if not fettered in his inward life by it, yet was hampered in the free development and use of all his powers for the Lord's service; for the Apostle, though he says that Christianity imparts true inward freedom even to slaves, also advises: "If thou mayest be free, use it rather." (1 Cor. vii. 21.) Many persons were moved, by motives of piety, to give their freedom to slaves of good character, and allowed them to learn a trade, or fit themselves for monks or ecclesiastics. "I did not suppose," wrote the Abbot Isidorus, of Pelusium, when he was interceding for a slave with his master, "that any one who loves Christ, and who knows the grace by which we are all made free, could keep a slave in his possession."

Johannes Eleemosynarius, who was bishop of Alexandria from A.D. 606 to 616, sent for those persons of whom he had heard that they treated their slaves harshly, and said to them: "God has not given us slaves that we should smite them, but that they may serve us; perhaps not even for that, but that they may be supported by us with that which God has given us. For tell me—what has a man given to purchase one who was created in the image, and thought worthy of that high honour? Dost thou possess—thou who art his master—something more in thy body or in thy soul? Is he not equal to thee in all these respects? Hear what Paul says: 'As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Here there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free; but all are one in Christ.' If, therefore, we are equal to one another in Christ, we must also be equal in relation to one another; for Christ has assumed the form of a servant, in order to teach us that we must not exact ourselves against our servants. 'There is one Lord of all, who dwelleth on high, and looketh on the lowly; not on the high, but the lowly.' (Psa. cxiii. 6.) What, then, is the gold which we have given in

order to subject him as a slave, who has been purchased with ourselves by the blood of the Lord; one on whose account heaven and earth were created—whom angels serve—for whose sake Christ washed his disciples' feet—for whom he was crucified and suffered all things? But thou dishonourest him who is honoured by God, and smitest him without forbearance, as if he were not a partaker of the same nature as thyself. Tell me, I adjure thee, wouldest thou be willing that, as often as thou wert guilty of a sin, God would forthwith punish thee? Certainly not. Tell me, how canst thou pray daily, 'Forgive us, as we forgive our debtors?'" When these exhortations proved of no avail, he endeavoured to purchase the slaves.

As in the former period, so according to the prevalent principles of the church of this age, whoever followed an occupation that directly opposed the principles of the Christian faith, such as magic or soothsaying, was excluded from Christ's communion, although in secret many such things might pass unpunished. We find in Augustin, an example of an astrologer, who had previously deceived many with his vain art, being impelled by the powerful impressions made on his terrified conscience, to own his guilt to the bishop, and submit to confession before the church. On this occasion Augustin addressed the following words to his flock: "In order that ye may know how many in the congregation of Christians praise the Lord with their lips, and blaspheme him in their hearts, so this individual, alarmed by the almighty power of the Lord, takes his refuge in the mercy of the Lord. Long was he deceived and a deceiver—and spoke many lies against God, who had given men power to do good, and not to do evil. This man said: 'That not one's own will, but Venus, was the cause of adultery—not one's own will, but Mars, was the cause of murder—and that not God, but [the planet] Jupiter, made a person righteous.' How many Christians has he deprived of their money! He now abhors falsehood, as we are bound to believe he professes penitence, and seeks mercy. We must commend him to your eyes and to your hearts. Love him in your hearts; watch over him with your eyes! Pray for him through Christ!" Augustin reports that he committed his deceptive books to the flames, like the persons mentioned in Acts xix. 19.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHRISTIANS IN AFFLICTION AND GENERAL PUBLIC CALAMITIES.

As Christianity always has proved itself to be the only powerful preservative against the seductions of worldly prosperity—as it allows man to find no abiding home on earth, and excites in his breast a constant vital longing after his heavenly fatherland; so it is also the only system that gives a firm support to man in times of universal destruction, when the form of this world is changed, and structures erected centuries before are thrown down. Christianity alone inspires men with new life in the midst of death, and is able to transform everything, however hostile, into materials for practising discipleship to the Lord in self-sacrificing love.

In such an age lived Augustin; the age of the approaching dissolution of the Roman Empire, when destruction, continually advancing nearer, at last seized hold of blooming North Africa. Augustin consoled his flock, not by the deceptive hope of better times, a hope which coming events would soon contradict, but by pointing to a ground of hope which could not be destroyed under all the changes of earthly things. "Wish not," he said, "to hope for more peaceful and better times; you will deceive yourselves, my brethren. Do not promise yourselves what the gospel does not promise you. You know what the gospel says. I am speaking to Christians; we must not be unfaithful to our faith. This gospel says, that in the last times tribulations will prevail; but he that endures to the end shall be saved. Let no one, therefore, promise himself what the gospel does not promise, so that a person should say, Joyful times are coming, then I will do this or buy that. It is good for thee to hear *Him* who is never deceived, and never deceives—who has promised joy not here below, but in him (John xvi. 33); hope thou, that when this earthly has passed away, thou shalt reign with him for ever, lest if thou wishest to reign here, thou mayest find joy neither here nor there."

In such calamitous times, there were many who, not

reflecting that in various important epochs for the development of the kingdom of God among mankind, similar appearances may be repeated before the last decisive epoch comes—believed that they could infer from the signs of the times, the near impending appearance of the Lord, or could compute that point of time which the heavenly Father had reserved among his secret councils. Augustin disapproved this style of thinking, although he passed judgment on the various opinions with evangelical moderation. "We must indeed," he wrote, "guard, as far as mortals can, against the error on both sides; but yet, he does not appear to me to err who acknowledges his own ignorance, but he who believes that he knows what he does not know. Let us, therefore, remove from our midst that wicked servant who, saying in his heart: 'My lord delayeth his coming,' begins to beat his fellow-servants (Matt. xxiv. 48); for he, without doubt, hates the appearance of his Lord. Putting him out of view, let us represent to ourselves the three good servants who conscientiously and soberly attended to their master's affairs, longed after his appearance, and waited for it with watchfulness. If one of these believes that the Lord will come sooner, and another that he will come later, and the third confesses his total ignorance respecting the event, yet they all agree with the gospel in this point, that they all love their Lord's appearance: let us see which among them agrees most with it. The first says: 'Let us watch and pray, because our Lord will come quickly.' The second says: 'Let us watch and pray, since *this* life is short and uncertain, although the Lord is to come later.' The third says: 'Let us watch and pray, since this life is short and uncertain, and we know not the time when our Lord cometh.' The gospel says: 'Take heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is. I pray you, what does the third say otherwise than what we hear the gospel say? All, in their anxiety for the kingdom, wish that what the first says were true; but the second denies this; the third denies neither what the one nor the other affirms, but admits that he does not know which of them speaks the truth. If, then, that comes to pass which the first predicts, the second and the third will rejoice with them; for they all join in loving their Lord's appearance. But if that does not happen, and that which the second says appear more probable, it is to be

feared that during the delay, those who believed what the first said, may become unsettled; and thou seest what injury to their souls may thence ensue. And even if they have faith enough, to turn themselves to the expectation of the second, and still to wait faithfully and patiently for their delaying Lord, yet their adversaries will endeavour by their reproaches to turn many weak persons from the faith. But the adherents of the second, if he should be mistaken, will not be disturbed, but will be transported by unexpected joy. Of these, therefore, who love the appearance of their Lord, the first is heard with greater pleasure, the second is more surely believed, but he who confesses that he does not know which of these opinions is true, wishing the one, and enduring the other, in neither case does he err; for he maintains nothing, he denies nothing."

Augustin declared himself more strongly against these computations of the Lord's coming in his exposition of the sixth Psalm, because it had been said by the Lord: "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father has put in his own power" (Acts i. 7); and "of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. xxiv. 36); and since it is written that "the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, it is sufficiently evident from this that no one by any certain computation of years can pretend to a knowledge of that point of time." (1 Thess. v. 2.)

When the news of the sacking of Rome by the Goths, in A.D. 410, was first brought to Carthage, and exaggerated reports of the destruction of that capital of the ancient world, which had hitherto been deemed imperishable, had spread universal consternation, Augustin directed the attention of his flock from the destruction of a perishable earthly glory to the ever-enduring consolations of the gospel. He said: * "Is thy

* Quare enim turbaris? Pressuris mundi turbatur cor tuum, quomodo navis illa, ubi dormiebat Christus? Ecce quæ causa est, homo cordate, ut turbetur cor tuum; ecce quæ causa est. Navis ista, in qua Christus dormit, cor est ubi fides dormit. Quid enim tibi novi dicetur, Christiane, quid enim tibi novi dicetur? Temporibus Christianis vastatur mundus, deficit mundus. Non tibi dixit Dominus tuus, deficiet mundus? Quare credebas quando promittebatur, et turbaris quando completur? Ergo tempestas sævit in cor tuum; cave naufragium, excita Christum.

heart agitated by the distresses of the world, like that vessel in which Christ slept? Behold the reason why thy heart is agitated. That vessel in which Christ sleeps, is thy heart, where faith sleeps. The apostle says "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. iii. 17); by faith Christ dwells in thee. Faith present, Christ is present: faith being awake, Christ is awake. Faith forgetting itself, Christ is asleep. Has God given thee some inconsiderable thing in sending Christ to thee at the time when the world was growing old, to revive thee when all things are sinking? When all things are growing old, he comes and makes thee anew. Cleave not to the world in its decrepitude; and be not ashamed to become youthful in Christ. Love the word of God, and no vexation will affect you. Be gentle, sympathize with the sufferers (the fugitives from Italy), receive the sick, and on this occasion, when there are many foreigners, needy and suffering, let your hospitality show itself abundantly. Oh that Christians would do what Christ commands, then the heathen would blaspheme only to their own disgrace."

The tide of desolation approached Augustin's native land. The wild Vandals invaded North Africa, and spread devastation on all sides. As Arians, they were especially violent against the clergy of the dominant church The question was raised, whether it were allowable for the bishops to save themselves by flight. Augustin spoke strongly against the hirelings who forsook their flocks for which they ought to have been ready to lay down their lives. "Why did they not rather strive boldly, by the Lord's help, against their fear? This is done where love is ardent, and worldly desires do not prevail. For love says: 'Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?' (2 Cor. xi. 29.) But love is of God. Let us therefore pray that love may be given to us by him who has enjoined it upon us." He then depicts the advantages which the churches might derive from the presence of their bishops in times of the greatest distress. "According to the abilities which the Lord has given them, they will help all; some are baptized, others receive the com-

Habitare, inquit apostolus, Christum per fidem in cordibus vestris. Per fidem habitat in te Christus. Fides præsens, præsens est Christus; fides vigilans, vigilans est Christus; fides oblita, dormiens est Christus.—August. *Serm.* 81, § 8.

munion; all are comforted, edified, encouraged to pray to God, who can avert all that is feared—so that they may be ready in either case, that if the cup cannot pass from them, *His* will may be done who can will only what is good." As Augustin spent the last days of his advanced age in a city besieged by the barbarians, who threatened its destruction, it was his daily prayer: "May the Lord either deliver the city, or if this be not his will, may he grant his servants strength to prefer his will to theirs, or take them to himself out of the world!"

Amidst the overwhelming stream of desolation, monasticism insured a place of refuge; the privations forced upon persons by the pressure of external necessity, here became matter of free and joyful renunciation. When individuals sought shelter from the raging storms of the world in quiet solitude, they learned how to collect, enjoy, and communicate treasures of which not all the assaults and ravages of barbarian hordes could rob them. Thus Jerome writes, in A.D. 411: "I wish that we renounced the world voluntarily, and not by compulsion. I prefer that freely-adopted poverty which tends to repose, to that forced poverty which is endured as a calamity. Finally, in relation to the miseries of the present time, when the sword rages in every quarter, he is rich enough who does not want bread, and he is powerful enough who is not a slave." But even a monk in this season of desolation could not easily find a place where he would not be disturbed by the universal tribulation, and where the shield of faith was not required, in order to stand firm in the face of threatening destruction. Jerome (A.D. 412), in his quiet retirement at Bethlehem, amidst his zealous biblical studies and labours for the advantage of posterity, was disturbed by the ravaging incursion of the Arab nomads, so that he was obliged to renounce his studies, and, as he writes, "scarcely, through the mercy of Christ, was able to escape out of their hands." Crowds of unfortunate fugitives who, after the capture and plundering of Rome by Alaric, came from that city and other districts of the West that were overwhelmed by the barbarians to Bethlehem, roused his sympathy by their appearance. He himself says, in the preface to the third book of his commentary on Ezekiel: "Everything which has been originated is now destroyed; and what had grown to maturity is now

antiquated. Who could believe that *that* Rome which had been erected on the world would be involved in ruin, and be at once the mother and grave of its people—that all the shores of the East, of Egypt and of North Africa, would be filled with crowds of the inhabitants of the foremost city in the world, dragged away as bondsmen and bondswomen? That Bethlehem must daily receive, as beggars, persons of both sexes, who once belonged to the nobility, and enjoyed a superabundance of wealth? If we cannot help these, we at least share in their grief, and blend our tears with theirs, and hence we have interrupted our commentary on Ezekiel and almost all our studies; and, instead, we endeavour to change the words of Scripture into works, and not to preach but to practise piety." Disturbed in the day-time by the crowds of the impoverished, sick and wounded, who had escaped from the hands of the barbarians, and sought in the monasteries shelter, consolation, and help; he was obliged to have recourse to the night, with eyes weakened by old age, in order to be able to continue his labours on the Bible, and to seek repose for his deeply agitated heart in the exposition of the Scriptures.

Chrysostom experienced many severe sufferings, dragged from one place of banishment to another, until his weak body gave way to accumulated toils, what he had often foretold to the people of his charge. As he had often urged upon them the words of Job, "Blessed be the name of the Lord for all things," as the source of all joy and of all consolation under all sufferings, so this was his watchword amidst those trials under which he closed his life as a witness of the truth, the last expression that fell from his dying lips. He thus closes an epistle in which he endeavoured to console his deeply sorrowing friend Olympias, at Constantinople: "Only about one thing I have a requested to make, respecting which I have never ceased to admonish you, to dismiss grief and to praise God, to bless him for all things, even for these sufferings. Thus you will gain the greatest benefits, and give a death-blow to the devil. Thus will all clouds be easily dispersed, and you well enjoyed unalloyed peace." When she had expressed her sorrow, that she could not, by her influence, procure his recall from banishment, he wrote to her: "Why do you mourn, why do you lament, and bring a worse evil on yourself than your enemy could suspend over you? What

troubles you? That you have not removed me from this place of banishment! Yet you have done your part, since you have set every thing in motion. But if you have not succeeded, that is no ground of sorrow; for perhaps it has pleased God to appoint a longer period to my course, in order that I may obtain a more resplendent crown. Wherefore do you mourn, then, for that which leads us to triumph, since you ought to rejoice that we are honoured with such a distinction far exceeding our deserts. But does the solitude in which I dwell disturb you? and what is more pleasant than a residence here? Rest, peace, no business, and soundness of body. If the city offers nothing to purchase, it makes no difference to me; for I am abundantly supplied. I have never ceased, and shall never cease to say: 'There is only one evil—*sin;* everything else is dust and smoke.'" "It is the nature of suffering," he writes, "that those who bear it calmly and steadfastly, thereby raise themselves above every object of dread, out of the reach of the darts of the devil, and learn to despise every thing which can be undertaken against them." "As no change of weather, no cold, no bad nourishment can injure those who are sound in body," he says, "because health can ward off all injuries—so it is with the health of the soul. Even before the reward of heaven, virtue is its own reward. Thus Paul rejoiced when he was scourged and persecuted, and endured a thousand dreadful things. 'I rejoice under my sufferings for you,' he said. 'Virtue does not expect its reward first in heaven; already it finds it in the suffering itself: for this is the greatest reward, to suffer for the truth. Hence the company of the apostles departed joyfully from before the Sanhedrim, not only on account of the kingdom of heaven which they had in expectation, but because they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. This in itself is the greatest honour and crown, the victor's prize, the ground of inexhaustible joy."

PART III.

EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY DURING AND AFTER THE IRRUPTION OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS INTO THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE world and the glory of it pass away, but the word of God abides for ever, to renew the world and make it young again; to call forth from death a new and more glorious life.

We have seen destruction invade the world-wide empire of that city which arrogated to itself the epithet *eternal;* and we have seen even those great ecclesiastical establishments, the fruit of the blood of the martyrs, and of the protracted labours of enlightened and devout fathers of the church, carried away by this mighty overwhelming torrent. But while the pagans hopelessly mourned at the grave of earthly glory, and, filled with despair, beheld all the forms of ancient culture dashed in pieces by the hands of barbarians, devout Christians held fast to the anchor of believing hope, which raised them above all that was changeable, and gave them a firm stand-point in the midst of the destroying waters. They knew that, though heaven and earth might pass away, the words of the Lord could not pass away; and these words were to them, even when surrounded by death, an inexhaustible source of life. The existing ecclesiastical forms, as far as they were connected with the constitution of the Roman empire, necessarily perished in the universal breaking-up of society; but the essence of the church, as of Christianity, could not be touched by any destructive power, and at this period of the world's decrepitude

and exhaustion showed itself more evidently to be the unchangeable vital principle of a new creation. In this time of invading destruction, a Christian father (probably Leo the Great, before he was a bishop) thus wrote:* "Even the weapons by which the world is destroyed, subserve the operations of Christian grace. How many, who in the quiet of peace had delayed their baptism, were impelled to it by the fear of imminent danger! How many sluggish and lukewarm souls are roused by sudden and threatening alarm, on whom peaceful exhortation had produced no effect! Many sons of the church who have been brought into captivity, make their masters subject to the gospel, and become teachers of the Christian faith to those to whom the chances of war have subjected them. Others of the barbarians, who had entered the ranks of the Roman auxiliaries, have learnt in Christian countries what they could not learn in their native land, and returned to their homes instructed in Christianity. Thus nothing can prevent divine grace from fulfilling its designs, whatever they may be; so that conflict leads to unity, wounds are changed into restoratives, and that which threatened danger to the church is destined to promote its increase." Individuals in whom the gospel had kindled a flame of holy love, who combined the spirit of wisdom with the powerful energy of faith, appeared as messengers of heaven, as beings of a higher divine order, which indeed they were, among the corrupt enfeebled people who had succumbed to the rude power of the barbarians, and even among the conquerors themselves. It was here shown how much individuals could effect through

* Effectibus gratiæ Christianæ, etiam ipsa quibus mundus alteritur, arma famulantur. Quam multos enim qui in tranquillitate pacis sacramentum baptismatis suscepere differebant, ad aquam regenerationis confugere instantes periculi metus impulit; et tentis tepidisque animus quod diu cohortatio quieta non suasit, minax subito terror extorsit? Quædam ecclesiæ filii ab hostibus capti, dominos suos Christi evangelio mancipaverunt, et quibus conditione bellica serviebant, eisdem fidei magisterio præfuerunt. At alii barbari dum Romanis auxiliantur, quod in suis locis nosse non poterant, in nostris cognovere regionibus, et ad sedes suas cum Christianæ religionis institutione remearunt. Ita nihil obsistere divinæ gratiæ potest, quod minus id quod voluerit impleatur, dum etiam discordiæ ad unitatem trahunt et plagæ in remedia vertuntur; ut ecclesia unde metuit periculum, unde sumat augmentum.—*De vocat. omn. gentium,* lib. ii. cap. 33. (Leon. M. opp. ed. Balerin. tom. ii. p. 242.)

the power of religion. We shall first direct our attention to the North African church, in which the period of devastation immediately followed the period of its greatest prosperity.

CHAPTER I.

THE NORTH AFRICAN CHURCH UNDER THE VANDALS.

THE fierce nation of the Vandals who, though they made an outward profession of Christianity, had been taught and guided by an ignorant and fanatical clergy, and appear to have had no idea of the nature of real Christianity, overwhelmed North Africa under their despotic and cruel king Genseric. Fanatical hatred against the confessors of another creed (for the Vandals had adopted a creed opposed to that of the church, namely, the Arian) accompanied insatiable avarice, and served as a cloak for it. The corruption of nominal Christians in the opulent cities of North Africa was certainly very great, as appears from the words of Augustin already quoted: still there were not wanting here and there churches of genuine Christians, traces of whom we have indicated in the former part of this work. Persecution consequently operated differently on the different elements of the churches, and became a sifting and refining process. To many the question was in effect put,—Wilt thou deny thy faith in order to retain the undisturbed enjoyment of earthly things, or wilt thou suffer the loss of all things in order to remain true to thy faith? And this question made Christianity, for many persons, a concern of heart-felt importance, which it would not have been without such a call to decision. Splendid examples are presented to us of a faith that joyfully surrendered all things and confidently endured all things under these persecutions. Distinguished men of Roman descent had filled offices of state with Christian fidelity under the chief of the savage people, whom God had given them for their ruler; but now he exacted from them, as a proof of their obedience, that they should confess the same faith with him, and promised

them great worldly advantage on their compliance with this condition. But here, where their convictions and their consciences were affected, obedience found its limits. For the sake of their faith, they readily surrendered earthly good, honours and liberty, and often even their life in martyrdom.

To one of the first of these confessors, named Arcadius, who first of all was condemned to banishment, the bishop of Constantina, in Numidia, addressed an epistle of powerful exhortation, in which, among other things, he charged him: "Look to him on whom thou hast depended; adhere to him; hold him fast; forsake him not; forsake him not; look not back on thy wife, thy property or thy family. Raise thy heart! The fallen Chief of the Angels himself combats thee; but on thy side are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Fear not; he helps thee, in order to crown thee as conqueror. Christ was smitten on the face, was spat upon, was crowned with thorns; the Holy One was placed on a level with lawless robbers, he was pierced with the spear, he died; Christ suffered all this for thy guilt. How much more oughtest thou to stand firm for thy soul's sake, that no one may rob thee of thy crown of victory! Fear nothing, for the whole church prays for thee that thou mayest conquer. The Lord Christ endures along with thee; the church endures along with thee."

Martinian and Maxima, because they would not deny their faith, were handed over, after severe tortures, as slaves to the chief of a savage tribe that inhabited the wilds of North Africa. They strove by discourse and conduct to convert the heathen people, and by their agency many persons were won to the Christian faith, who till that time had been totally ignorant of it. Upon this, they sent messengers through trackless districts to a city under the Roman government, in order to obtain fresh Christian teachers and ministers. They came; many persons were baptized, and a church was built. But these exiles, in their state of wretchedness and slavery, had effected so much, especially for the spread of a doctrine which the Vandals regarded as heretical, that the wrath of the cruel Genseric was roused afresh. His vengeance could reach them, because the Moors were in some measure dependent on the king of the Vandals. He gave orders to bind them to horses let loose in a forest, that thus they might be dragged

to death. While the Moors lamented, the two martyrs, with peaceful looks, bade farewell to each other, saying, "Pray for me; God has heard our wish; thus we shall reach the kingdom of heaven." They met their fate praying and singing.

Thus God glorified himself among this heathen people by the powerful faith of these sufferers, and even those persons who were not led to embrace the gospel might yet be brought to acknowledge the power of that God who had imparted such strength to his confessors. At a later period, when the Moorish chieftain in the district of Tripolis was at war with the Vandalic king Thorismund, he sent some of his people in disguise into the parts through which the Vandals passed, and when the latter had completely profaned the churches which did not belong to those who held their faith, these Moors showed all possible reverence to the buildings, as well as to the clergy who had been ill-treated by the Vandals; "for," said the Moorish prince, "I do not know who the God of the Christians is; but if he is as powerful as he is represented, he will take vengeance on those who insult him, and succour those who do him honour."

When Genseric, in the year 439, sacked Carthage, the capital of North Africa, many persons were plunged from the summit of earthly felicity into the deepest misery. Whole families, after losing all their property, were glad to escape with their lives and liberty, and wandered in a state of destitution into different countries. Others, both men and women of the first families, were dragged away as prisoners and sold for slaves in various parts. Yet earthly sufferings contributed to the spiritual salvation of many, and gave occasion for the exercise of Christian virtues. Many a one who had felt no concern about religious matters while in prosperity, was led by outward distress to a sense of his spiritual wants. Thus a senator, who became a wanderer with his whole family, had to that time remained a stranger to Christianity, and was first brought to the faith by his sufferings. Bishop Theodoret, in recommending him as an object of Christian love and sympathy, wrote thus: "I am struck with admiration at the man's disposition, for he praises the Disposer of his destiny as if he were in the midst of worldly prosperity, and thinks nothing of his severe trials; for his misfortunes were the means of his gaining piety, while

during his prosperity he would not come within the sound of the gospel. But now, stripped of that prosperity, he has renounced heathenism, and possesses the riches of faith; wherefore he makes light of his misfortunes."

A young female, of a noble family, was sold for a slave to some Syrian merchants, and thus came into the service of a family living at Cyrus, a town on the Euphrates, where Theodoret was bishop. Along with her was also sold another female, one of her own former slaves, with whom she now shared the same lot. But the slave did not now refuse the internal bond of love, when the changes of fortune had dissolved the external bond between herself and her former mistress. Next to the service of their common Master she rendered service to her former mistress. Gradually this circumstance became known throughout the whole city, and made a great impression. Some pious soldiers made a subscription in order to purchase the freedom of this young female. Bishop Theodoret, who had been absent during these occurrences, on his return, commissioned the deacons of the church to make provision for the maintenance of the young Carthaginian when she had obtained her freedon. When it was discovered that her father was still living, and filled a civil office in the West, Theodoret took measures that she might be restored to him.

Among the young females of the higher ranks who were sold for slaves, was one named Julia. Her master was a merchant in Palestine, named Eusebius, who still adhered to paganism. She fulfilled her duty towards him with Christian fidelity, in a manner which won his respect for herself and for her religion. She devoted her leisure time, after fulfilling the duties of her station, to devotion, to reading the Scriptures, and prayer. Eusebius took her with him on a commercial journey to France. On his way, he landed at Capocorfo, a promontory of Corsica. It happened that a pagan feast was celebrated there just at that time. Eusebius took part in it, and offered a sacrifice. But the pious Julia remained on board, grieving for the pagans, who gave themselves up to all kinds of indulgences. The governor of the pagan people, when he heard that she alone had absented herself from the festival, wished to purchase her from her master, that he might compel her to take a part in the

idolatrous service. But the master would not part with her at any price; taking advantage, however, of his having fallen into a deep sleep, owing to intoxication at the heathen festival, the pagans carried off Julia by force from the vessel. The governor promised her freedom if she would sacrifice. But she answered, "The service of Christ, whom I serve daily with a pure heart, is my freedom." She was ill-treated, spit upon, struck in the face; but she said, "My Lord Jesus suffered himself for my sake to be struck in the face and spit upon; ought not I for his sake to suffer the same?" When she was scourged, she said, "I confess him who was scourged for me." And thus she endured everything patiently, with faith in the Redeemer and love towards him, even to martyrdom.

Twenty years later, Rome, the metropolis of the ancient world, met with the same fate as the capital of North Africa, from the hands of the Vandalic king Genseric. It was owing solely to the representations of Bishop Leo, supported by the reverence with which his character inspired even the rude Vandals, that Rome was rescued from universal slaughter and utter destruction. Yet the impression of their deliverance had so little hold on the light-minded Romans that when a solemn thanksgiving was appointed, the bishop found the church empty, while the theatre and circus were crowded. This called forth a public rebuke from him, in which he said: "Let that expression of the Saviour touch your hearts, when he said of the ten lepers, whom he had cleansed by the power of his mercy, that only one returned to give thanks; and on the other hand the ungrateful men whose souls still retained their ungodliness, neglected the duty of piety, although their bodies had been restored to soundness. In order that this reproach of ingratitude may not fall also on you, return to the Lord, since ye know the wonders which God has been pleased to effect for us, and do not ascribe our deliverance to the influence of the stars [to a destiny determined by the course of the stars], but let your thanks be given to the unspeakable mercy of Almighty God, who was pleased to soften the hearts of the furious barbarians."

It was one consequence of the capture of Rome by this king, that a number of prisoners were carried off by the Vandals to Africa. They were sold to parties living in the

interior of the country; husbands were separated from their wives, and children from their parents. Bishop Deogratias of Carthage caused all the gold and silver vessels to be melted down, and employed the money obtained from them in purchasing the freedom of the persons who had been carried away captive, and in bringing together again members of families who had been separated from one another. As there was no other place large enough to receive so great a number, he set apart two large churches for their reception, and furnished them with chaff and beds. He settled also a daily maintenance for each one according to their station in life. As many had lost their health owing to the voyage and their hardships in confinement, he went round to them at set times with physicians. Food was carried after him, which he distributed to the sick under medical direction. At night he visited them on their beds in order to inquire after their health. The infirmities of age could not check this venerable man in his pious activity. As the blessing was great which proceeded from such a bishop to an oppressed church, so in proportion was the sorrow great which was felt at his death, three years after they had first enjoyed his paternal guidance.

Four-and-twenty years the church remained in a destitute state, as the Vandals would not allow a new bishop to be chosen. But under the reign of King Hunneric, who did not at first evince so persecuting a disposition, the Emperor Zeno gained permission for the election of a new bishop for the church. But the Vandalic king made a condition for his Roman subjects very hard and insidious, though not unfair, considering his relation to the Greek empire—namely, that the Arian churches should have the free exercise of their religion there on equal terms. Liberty also was to be granted to the Arian bishops in the East to preach in what language they liked, which indicates that already in the East certain languages began to be considered as sacred, and that there was a wish not to employ the Teutonic language used by Ulphilas in his translation of the Bible, as too rude for the service of the church. Chrysostom took a different view, for he gave a Gothic presbyter permission to preach at Constantinople in the Gothic language, wishing to show how Christianity was designed and suited to become an element of culture for all

barbarous nations. If these conditions were not assented to, all the non-Arian bishops and clergy of the North African church were to be banished among the Moors.

Since the clergy of Carthage could plainly foresee that a settlement concluded on such terms would be employed to find a pretext for many persecutions against the oppressed party in North Africa, they declared that "on such conditions we will have no bishop. May Christ who has guided the church hitherto, guide it still further!" But the church were very anxious to have a bishop again, and could not rest till one was chosen. The election fell on a man who by his pious zeal and powerful faith was well fitted for these difficult and perilous circumstances—Eugenius. His consecration was a great festival, especially for the young people, who had never yet seen a bishop in the church. We recognise in him a man qualified to guide the church in those difficult times, who through the power of faith and love could effect much with small means. His church, stripped of all its possessions by the Vandals, was very poor, and yet he was able to distribute large alms among a great number of needy persons. What was furnished to him by pious men daily, he distributed on the same day; and God did not for a single day suffer him to want the means of exercising his love. Such love, indeed, must have roused many hearts to liberality. But in proportion to the great reverence such conduct called forth from those who differed from him in religious belief, and to the facility it gave for propagating his faith, even among the Vandals—the jealousy of the Arian clergy, and the hatred of their tyrannical chief, was roused against him. It was required of him to send back all in the country occupied by the Vandals, who frequented his church. By this means not only would the bishop lose all influence over the Vandals, whose conversion to the orthodox faith was apprehended, but all those persons, although of Roman descent, who had taken offices in the state, and were therefore obliged to assume the Vandal dress, would be separated from the ancient church. Eugenius replied in a christian, manly spirit: "The house of God stands open for all; no one can send back those who wish to enter it."

But the civil authorities would not allow their designs to

be thwarted; they placed guards at the church-doors, who were ordered to apprehend and treat with violence all, both men and women, who came in Vandal attire.

After many single harsh and cruel measures, four thousand nine hundred and seventy-six of the clerical order, and other persons distinguished for their zeal, were condemned to banishment in an African desert. Among them were many sick persons, and individuals whom age had already deprived of sight. When they had reached the towns Sicca, Veneria, and Lares, on the borders of Numidia, whence the Moorish population were to fetch them, two Vandal functionaries of rank came to them, and endeavoured to persuade them to compliance with the will of the king, who would treat them with great honour; but their answer was, "We are Christians; we are orthodox Christians." They were now put in a very narrow prison, where they stood so close to one another that they could not move, and from which they were not allowed to stir on any account; so their retention in this prison, full of foul air, occasioned the greatest torture. Yet their faith gave them steadfastness and joy under their great trials. And when on a Sunday, in that miserable condition to which they had been reduced by their torturing imprisonment, without being able to refresh themselves, they were driven out by their pitiless Moorish leaders, they joyfully sang, in spite of all threatenings, the 149th Psalm. All the way they were met by their fellow-believers with wax-tapers, testifying to them their sorrow, sympathy, and love. "With what men," they said, "do you leave us, when you go to receive the martyrs' crown? Who will baptize these our children for us? (whom they bore in their arms). Who will give us the Holy Supper? Where shall we find a father-confessor? Who will conduct us to our final resting-place with prayer and singing? Oh that we could go along with you, that the sons might not be separated from the fathers!" But nothing would move the rude Moors; they scarcely allowed the prisoners time to receive the sympathy of those who met them. They drove forward the aged and the infirm with spears or with sharp stones. Those who were unable to walk, they dragged along, with their feet bound together, unmercifully over the rough stony roads. Many, of course, sunk under this inhuman treatment. The rest looked forward

to greater misery in the burning sandy deserts, full of venomous reptiles, where their only sustenance was barley.

The arrival of an ambassador from the Eastern Roman empire meanwhile produced apparently milder regulations. The king appointed a disputation between the bishops of both parties, which was to begin at Carthage on February 1, A.D. 484. A favourable result of a theological debate can only be expected when the contending parties are, first of all, agreed on the common grounds of their faith; and, after they have recognized one another as Christian brethren, confer in the spirit of love, humility, and self-denial respecting their differences of sentiment, and are ready to be led in all things by the spirit of the Lord. Thus they may expect that the Lord will show himself efficaciously among those who have really assembled in his name. But since most debates and conferences of this kind have not been held with such a spirit and disposition, but if not in a spirit of profane passion, yet in a spirit of self-willed zeal, they have commonly produced only greater enmity and more violent divisions. Here, with the passions on both sides so excited, with the natural mistrust of the oppressed against the dominant party, no good could possibly be expected from a conference on religious matters held under such circumstances. And this was not lost sight of by the dominant party. The whole tone of the royal summons gave intimations that this conference would furnish a pretext for the total suppression of the other party under the semblance of justice.

Eugenius, the bishop of Carthage, to whom the summons of the Vandalic king was first addressed, readily perceived the danger that threatened his fellow-believers; if they complied with the requisition, it was foreseen that no peaceful discussion of their doctrine would be permitted, but rather that an attempt would be made to suppress it by the influence of the dominant part; if they absented themselves, the accusation would be, that they stood self-condemned, since they dare not venture to defend themselves. Eugenius adopted the following expedient: he declared to the king that they by no means shrank from giving an account of their faith; but since this question concerned not merely the African church, but the whole of Christendom, they must wish that their brethren on the other side of the sea, espe-

cially those belonging to the Roman church, might join in this examination, which the king could grant without difficulty, since his power was everywhere acknowledged. The king returned to the bishop the insulting answer, "Make me master of the whole world, and I will gladly comply with your wishes." Eugenius replied: "It is of no use to desire impossibilities. All I have said is only this,—If the king wishes to become acquainted with our faith, which is the only true one, he may write to his friends; I will also write to my brethren in office, that they may come hither, and explain to you the faith which they hold in common with ourselves." To this the Vandal officer replied: "Do you put yourself on an equality with our sovereign?"

Ever since the divine power proceeding from Christ entered into the life of mankind, the natural and supernatural have not always been separated sharply from one another, in what is effected by its immediate impression, and in which the life of Christ is copied, the energy of faith, love, and prayer. And the spirit of the Lord has its peculiar mode of operation in various ages, depending on the wants of suffering humanity. Thus it happened that a blind man at Carthage, one Felix, had a dream several times in the night before the feast of Epiphany, intimating that he should go to the bishop, at the time when he was preparing the catechumens for baptism, and that if he touched the man's eyes they would be healed. When the afflicted man came to the bishop, the latter said to him, as became a Christian: "Depart from me, my brother. I am not worthy to do this; I am the poorest of all sinners, and therefore I am obliged to witness these sad times." Eugenius then betook himself to the place of baptism, accompanied by his clergy. When he rose from prayer, he said to Felix, who had followed him: "I have already told thee, my brother, that I am a sinful man, but the Lord, who has thought thee worthy of this special grace, may act towards thee according to thy faith, and open thy eyes." His prayer was heard. His enemies accused him of having effected this cure by magic.

The result, as might be expected, of this conference at Carthage was, that the oppressed party were accused of shunning a peaceful inquiry, and King Hunneric, who regarded them as convicted heretics, now issued an edict, by

which he deprived them of all free exercise of their religion, and subjected them to similar punishments to those which had been inflicted on the Arians in the Roman empire. The bishops were, part of them, banished to the island of Corsica, which had fallen into the hands of the Vandals, and the rest to the African deserts; among the latter was Eugenius.

These cruel persecutions furnished many beautiful examples of Christian fidelity and steadfastness. Thus, among others, seven monks were dragged from the town of Capso in the province of Byzacium, to Carthage. At first it was attempted to induce them by promises to apostatize from their faith. When they declared that they would not for any consideration betray their faith, they were loaded with heavy fetters, and cast into prison. But the people bribed the keepers of the prison, and day and night their prison was filled with visitors in whom their discourse infused fresh courage to endure all things. As they were led through the streets to the place of execution, they met death singing—"Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good-will amongst men." And to the people they cried out: "Fear no threats and no terrors of present suffering, but rather let us be willing to die for Christ, as he died for us." Attempts were made to shake the constancy of a youth among them, Maximus; but he answered: "No one shall separate me from my father, the Abbot Liberatus, nor from my brethren, who brought me up in the cloisters: with them I will suffer; with them also I hope to enter hereafter into glory."

There was a person of distinction at Carthage, Victorinus, who stood high in favour with the king, and received from him the most flattering promises to induce him to apostatize, but he answered: "I am certain of Christ, my Lord and God. Although we had only this present life, and had no eternity to hope for, yet I would not for the sake of enjoying the honours of this short time be ungrateful to my Creator, who has entrusted me with his faith."

A female, who, after much ill-treatment, had been banished into a distant desert, when a willingness was expressed to mitigate her exile, answered: "Bereft of all human consolations, I find a rich source of consolation and joy."

After some years had elapsed, Bishop Eugenius was re-

called from his banishment by the Vandalic king Guntamund, but about A.D. 496 he was again separated from his flock by King Thrasamund. As he knew not what might happen to him, he took farewell of his charge in an affecting epistle: "That the church of God," he writes, "may not be left in an uncertain state by my removal, or in other words, that the sheep of Christ may not be left to an unfaithful shepherd, I consider it necessary as a substitute for my personal presence to address this epistle to you, by which I request, exhort, and adjure you, to hold fast the true faith. My brethren, my sons and daughters in the Lord, let not my absence trouble you; for if you abide faithful to the pure doctrine, I shall not forget you at any distance, nor even will death itself separate me from you. Be assured, whatever may separate me outwardly from you, I shall have the palm of victory. If I go into banishment, I shall have before me the example of the Evangelist John. If I die, Christ is my life, and death my gain. If I return, I shall see you again in this life. If I do not return, I shall see you again in the life to come. Farewell! pray for me and fast! Meditate on what is written in Matt. x. 28: 'And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.'" Eugenius was banished to Albigeois, in France, where he spent his last days in peace and retirement, edifying by his life the inhabitants of that district.

Fulgentius belongs to the class of distinguished men whose labours were so important during this trying period of the North African Church. He held the office of a procurator (or manager of the revenues) in the African Vandalic kingdom, and was in a fair way of being promoted to more important offices. He endeavoured to mitigate the strictness which his office demanded by the spirit of love, but yet his gentle loving heart could find no rest in its exercise. His longing after a quiet spiritual life was developed with so much greater force from being thus brought into contact with the vexations of a worldly life. Might I not, he thought, by the grace of God, be changed like a Matthew, from a receiver of customs into a disciple of the Lord, and a preacher of the gospel. First of all he became a monk, and then at a time when King Thrasamund would endure no bishop not belonging to the

Arian party, he was chosen, against his will, bishop of a destitute church at Ruspe, in Byzacium. He vindicated his faith with boldness and dignity before his Arian sovereign. He thus addressed the king in an apology for his faith: "If I freely vindicate my faith, as far as God has granted me ability, yet I venture to believe I shall incur no suspicion of contumaciousness, since I am not unmindful either of my own inferiority, or of the king's dignity, and since I well know that I am bound to fear God and honour the king according to Rom. xiii. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 17. Certainly, he evinces true love and honour for you who answers your questions as the true faith requires." After praising the king for showing such great zeal for the pure doctrine of Scripture, though placed over a people not yet civilized, he says: "You are well aware, that whoever strives to know the truth, strives after a far higher good than he who seeks to extend the boundaries of a temporal kingdom." A second time he was banished to Sardinia. Here he was the spiritual guide of many other exiles, who joined themselves to him; from this spot also he imparted counsel, consolation, and confirmation by his epistles to his Christian friends whom he had left in Africa, and to those in other parts who applied to him on spiritual things and the welfare of their souls.

We will give a few extracts from these epistles. He thus exhorts a Roman senator:—"Direct the striving of thy heart to the Holy Scriptures, and learn there what thou wert, what thou art, and what thou wilt be. If thou comest with humility and gentleness to the Holy Scriptures, thou wilt certainly find the grace which raises up the fallen, leads him into the way of goodness, and conducts him to the blessedness of the kingdom of heaven." Writing to a widow, to console her for the loss of her husband, he says: "Pray earnestly with words, but always with holy thoughts and a holy walk. Thus you will fulfil the apostle's injunction to 'pray without ceasing' (1 Thess. v. 17); for in God's sight every good work is a prayer with which the all-sufficient God is well pleased." To the same individual he writes: "Let love to the (heavenly) bridegroom ever live in thee, who himself lives for ever, as after the resurrection was testified by the word of the angel: 'Why seek ye the living among the dead?' The living one is He who is the word of the Father,

and is himself the life of believers." In another epistle he says: "Christ came to pour forth the fire of divine love upon the earth, to burn up all the seeds of pride, and to communicate to humbled hearts the glow of holy contrition. Thus it comes to pass that we accuse ourselves for our sins with sincere hearts, and praise God with sincere humility for our good works; so that we thank him for what his love has given us, and confess ourselves guilty wherein our weakness has sinned against him. Contrition of heart awakens sensibility for prayer. Humbleness of mind craves divine aid. Contrition of heart feels its wounds; but prayer seeks healing to obtain soundness. And who is capable of that? Who can pray in a right manner unless the Physician himself infuse the beginning of spiritual desire? Or who can persist in prayer, unless God, who begins it in us, increases it, and carries on to perfection what he has implanted?" Against an ascetic pride he thus writes: "In vain thou despisest thy earthly goods, if thou carriest in thy heart punishable pride. For not only do those sin whose hearts are lifted up on account of their riches; those persons are still more criminal whose hearts are lifted up on account of their contempt of riches." In his third epistle he writes: "The souls of all who are justified and live in the faith are severely tried while here. Yes, only those souls know what severe pressure they suffer, into whom the true light pours itself which enlightens every man that comes into the world." He warns equally against despair and overconfidence. "Who prevents the hand of the Almighty Physician by his culpable despair, from effecting the salvation of man? Truly the Physician says: 'The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.' If our Physician is rightly qualified, he can cure all sickness. If our God is merciful, he can forgive all sins. That is not perfect goodness, by which all evil is not overcome. That is not a perfect art of healing for which there is one incurable disease. Therefore let no one remain in his sickness through despair of the physician. Let no one perish in the consumption of his sins, because he underrates God's mercy. The apostle says (Rom. v. 6), that 'Christ died for the ungodly,' and (1 Tim. i. 15), that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' Sound conversion consists in two things; repentance is not forsaken by hope, nor hope forsaken by repentance, if

a man with his whole heart renounces his sins, and with his whole heart places his hope of forgiveness in God."

He was soon recalled from his second banishment under the mild government of King Hilderic. The return of the persecuted confessors was a festival for the Carthaginian people. Multitudes flocked to meet them at the port; but Fulgentius was received with the greatest love and veneration. When he returned from Carthage to his church, great crowds met him all the way with torches and garlands. Yet he who had remained steadfast in his faith amidst his sufferings, remained also steadfast in humility, in this return of prosperity, when he was threatened by refined (and so much the more dangerous) temptations to pride. The reverence which was paid him only made him feel more deeply his own unworthiness, his internal sinfulness, which the Christian still suffers in the life of grace here below. He did not desire to work miracles; for the performance of wonderful things, he said, does not give righteousness, but only fame among men. But he who is famed among men, unless he is also a righteous man, will not escape eternal punishment. But he who by God's mercy is justified, and lives as a righteous man in God's sight, however little he may be known to men, will have a part in the salvation of the saints." When he was required to pray for the sick or for any one in affliction, he prayed with this addition, "Lord, thou knowest what is serviceable for the welfare of our souls. If, therefore, we ask thee for what the present necessity admonishes us to ask of thee, may thy mercy grant what will not hinder our spiritual advantage. May our humble prayer therefore be so heard by thee, that before all things thy will may be done." When those persons who had asked him for his intercession, returned him thanks for its being heard, he answered: "It happened not on account of my merit, but of your faith. The Lord has granted it not to me, but to you." His biographer and pupil says of him, in his own spirit: "This admirable man would not have the reputation of a worker of miracles, although he performed daily great wonders, since by his holy exhortations he led many unbelievers to the faith, many teachers of error to a knowledge of the truth; many who had led abandoned lives were brought under the laws of temperance; drunkards learned sobriety, and adulterers chastity; the grasping and covetous imparted

their all to the poor; humility became pleasant to the proud, peace to the quarrelsome, obedience to the disobedient. Such were the wonders that Fulgentius strove always to perform."

CHAPTER II.

SEVERINUS IN GERMANY.

As the Lord sends his angels where their help is most needed, so amidst the ravages and desolation which followed that immigration of the nations by which the Roman empire was shattered in pieces, he sent assistance, after the death of the world-waster Attila, in the person of a distinguished man inflamed with holy love to the various tribes in the vicinity of the Danube. He was exactly the man they required. His name was Severinus. His whole appearance had something mysterious. As he was not accustomed to speak of himself, nothing determinate is known respecting his native country. Though many persons of all classes, who had gathered round him from the vicinity or a distance, wished to know his country, yet they did not venture to ask him; till at last a priest who had fled to him from Italy, summoned up courage to put the question to him. Severinus at first replied in his peculiar manner with good-natured playfulness: "What! do you take me for some runaway slave? then provide a ransom, which you can pay for me if I am inquired for." Then he added in a serious tone: "What pleasure can it be to a servant of God to specify his home or his descent, since by silence he can so much better avoid all boasting. I would that the left hand knew nothing of the good work which Christ grants the right hand to accomplish, in order that I may be a citizen of the heavenly country. Why need you know my earthly country, if you know that I am truly longing after the heavenly one? But know this, that the God who has granted you to be a priest, has commissioned me to live among this heavily-oppressed people." After that, no one ventured to propose such a question to him. But probably he was a native of the West, and had withdrawn into one of the deserts

of the East in order to devote himself to a quiet life of holy contemplation. Here he received the divine call to sacrifice his rest for the benefit of the suffering people in the West, as at a later period when he would gladly have retired again into solitude, a divine voice often admonished him not to deprive the oppressed people of his presence.

The regions in which he placed himself, known at this day as Austria and Bavaria, were just then the scene of the greatest desolation and confusion. No place was secure; one savage tribe followed another; all social order was broken up. The country was laid waste; the natives were carried away as captives. Universal destitution and famine followed the incessant wars. As Severinus had lived long among these people, and laboured much among them, his fame was widely spread, and the episcopal dignity was offered him; but he rejected it, declaring "that it was enough for him to be deprived of his beloved solitude, and to be brought by the divine providence into these parts where he was obliged to live among men who gave him no rest."

It must indeed have made a great impression on persons rendered effeminate by luxury, as well as on the savage tribes, when they saw Severinus voluntarily renouncing all the conveniences of life, and contenting himself with the most meagre fare; and in the midst of winter, when the Danube was frozen so hard that waggons could pass over it, going about barefooted in the ice and snow. Effeminate men might learn from him what was so necessary, in their altered condition, to make themselves independent of outward things, to rise above present sufferings by living in the spirit, to mollify and sweeten want and destitution by spiritual joy. Men belonging to the barbarous tribes who saw before them only weaklings whom they had crushed by the superiority of physical force, and who knew no other superiority, must have been struck with wonder and awe when they witnessed with their own eyes, how such a man with a body reduced by abstinence could accomplish the greatest things, simply by a spiritual power, the power of a soul animated by faith and love. What a contrast between him and worldly-minded ecclesiastics! as one of them once said to him, "Contrive, thou holy man, to leave our city, that during thy absence we may have some rest from fasting and watching!" Glowing

as his heart was with love, Severinus could not refrain from tears that a person belonging to so sacred a vocation could disgrace himself and his order by such a frivolous speech.

He was very far from regarding the privations to which he submitted as peculiarly meritorious, or entitling him to be esteemed a saint. If any one commended him on this account, he said: "Do not imagine that what you see is a merit on my part; it ought rather to serve you as a wholesome example. Let it humble human pride. We are chosen for this purpose that we may effect some good; as the apostle says, the Lord has chosen us 'before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.' Only pray for me, that the gifts of my Saviour may not issue in the increase of my condemnation, but in the advancement of my salvation."

However strict and severe he was against himself, he was full of tender sympathy for the wants and sufferings of others. "He felt hunger," his pupils said of him, "only when others suffered hunger; he felt cold, only when others were destitute of clothing." He made use of everything in order to assist the necessitous in these parts. His prayers, his exhortations, the example of his self-sacrificing love, rendered possible what was apparently impossible in a desolated, impoverished country that was always liable to famine. From many places the tithes of the produce were sent to him, for collecting which he employed the resident clergy, besides clothing for the destitute. On one occasion, in the middle of winter, people came through the ice and snow over mountainous and pathless districts, laden with clothing, which the inhabitants of Noricum had sent to him for the poor. He gave readily to the poor more than was sufficient for their mere necessities. In consequence of his advice, many persons from the surrounding places and towns took refuge in the considerable town of Lauriacum (the modern Lorch), on the Danube, in order to find protection from the wandering hordes of the barbarians. It so happened that he had received, through the merchants, a quantity of olive oil, a commodity very scarce in these parts. He regarded it as a most agreeable opportunity for gratifying his beloved poor, of whom a great number were residing in that place of refuge. He assembled

them all in a church, and, to the great joy of the poor people, divided to each one a due proportion of the oil.

While he thus cared for the earthly wants of men, and divided earthly gifts among them, he never omitted to combine with all a blessing for their hearts, and to direct their attention to the source of all spiritual and temporal blessings. He opened the assembly with prayer, and before he proceeded to the distribution of the gifts, took care to conclude with the words, "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" He admonished the poor that they should receive these gifts as from the hands of the Lord, and offer praise to him. His love was wide and comprehensive, as is the nature of genuine Christian love, not narrowed by any partial considerations. In the barbarians, as well as in the Romans, in Arians not less than in the orthodox, he beheld brethren who required his aid. When he met with the princes or generals of the wild barbarians who were attached to the Arian doctrine, he did not begin with disputing on their favourite dogma—he did not repel them by pronouncing sentence of condemnation on the doctrine they professed; but attracted them first of all by the power of love, and then imparted to them such exhortations or instructions as were best adapted to the circumstances of each individual. The Arian chief of the Rugii, who dreaded the power of the Goths, asked advice of Severinus, whom he regarded as an oracle, respecting his affairs. Severinus answered: "If we were connected by a common faith with one another, you must have preferred questioning me respecting the concerns of eternal life. But since you only ask me respecting the well-being of that temporal life which we share in common, receive my advice. You need not fear the power of the Goths, if you do not slight the warnings of humility. Do not neglect seeking peace, even with the most insignificant, and never trust to your own strength. 'Cursed,' says Holy Writ, 'is the man who trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.' (Jer. xvii. 5.)"

The power which Severinus exerted over the minds of these men is evident from many examples. The son of that chief of the Rugii who regarded Severinus as his most faithful and trusty counsellor, wished to take by surprise Lauriacum, in

which, by Severinus's advice, so great a multitude of men belonging to the surrounding districts had taken refuge from the swords of the barbarians, and to disperse those who had settled there in various parts of his territory. When this alarming news had reached Lauriacum, they all besought Severinus to meet the Rugian chief, and to mollify him. Severinus immediately set out, and travelled all night, so that early in the morning he met the chief several miles from the town. When the chief expressed his concern that Severinus had so wearied himself, and inquired the reason of his making such haste, he answered: "Peace be with you, excellent king. I come as an ambassador of Christ, to implore favour for your subjects. Think of the blessings which the Lord has often imparted to your father by me as his instrument. During the whole of his reign, he did not venture to do anything without taking my advice. And following my wholesome exhortations, he learned, from his own experience, the advantages that accrue to conquerors from not being rendered haughty by their victories." The Rugian chief pretended that he was actuated only by anxiety for the welfare of the inhabitants of that town; he wished them not to be a prey to the rapacity or to the sword of the Alemanni or Thuringii, since they might find protection in his own towns and fortresses. Severinus replied: "Have those people been snatched from the frequent incursions of the barbarians by your darts and swords, or have they not rather been redeemed by the grace of God, in order to be able to serve you still longer? Do not, therefore, excellent king, disdain my advice. Take my security for these your subjects, and do not expose them to ill-usage from so great a host; for I depend upon my Lord, that he who permitted me to dwell among them during their distresses, will grant me power to keep my pledge in reference to their guidance." On hearing this, the king was induced to retire with his army.

So much dependence was placed on the protective power of this single individual, that the inhabitants of the Roman fortresses in this district requested him to reside in succession among them, since they believed his presence would be a greater security than their walls. As long as he was with them, they thought that no disaster could befall them. Thus, in the town of Passau, he had a small cell assigned him,

where he reposed when the inhabitants called him thence, in order to be protected by his intercession from being pillaged by the Alemanni, whose king, Gewald, honoured and loved him greatly, and had wished formerly to come to this town to see Severinus once more. Severinus went to meet him, to avoid the admission of so troublesome a guest into the town. His exhortation made such an impression on the king, that he was seized with a violent tremor, and afterwards declared to his soldiers, that in none of the perils of war had he felt such trepidation. When in this state he desired Severinus to acquaint him with his wishes; the latter prayed that he would do what would be also for his own advantage—keep his people back from laying waste the Roman territory, and set at liberty the persons who had been dragged into captivity by his subjects. The consequence was that a multitude of these unfortunate persons actually regained their freedom.

His magnanimous trust in God gave courage and strength to the weak in their calling. When he was staying in the city of Faviana, the adjacent country, even to the walls, was disturbed by a horde of barbarians, who seized both men and cattle. Several of the citizens bewailed their misfortunes to Severinus. He asked the commander of the garrison whether he had no soldiers to pursue the marauders. The tribune answered: "I cannot venture, with my small force, to attack the greater force of the enemy. Yet if you tell me to do it, I will venture; for I hope to conquer, if not by force of arms, yet by your prayers." Severinus encouraged him to trust in God. "Go forth," he said, "confiding in God's name. If God be with you, the power and strength of men matter not. If your soldiers are unarmed, they must take weapons from the enemy. Since the merciful God goes before you, the weak will become the strongest. God will fight for you. Therefore only make haste; but above all things observe this, to bring me all the barbarians whom you capture, unhurt." The tribune accordingly marched forth. Half a mile from the city he met with the enemy; he put them to flight, armed his men with the weapons he took from them, and brought the prisoners unhurt, as he had promised, to Severinus. Having refreshed them with meat and drink, Severinus dismissed them with these words: "Go and warn your fellow-countrymen not to venture here again for the purposes of

plunder, for they will not escape punishment from God, who fights for his people."

Severinus was regarded as a prophet. It might be, that among the gifts with which God honoured this extraordinary man, that of a seer might be included. It might be, that by the superiority of his spirit, filled with the divine life, he appeared as a prophet to the men among whom he lived, who were so far inferior to him, when he spoke with such confidence in the inspiration of his rock-firm faith in God, when he announced impending judgments to men who had not yet been brought to reflection, or roused to repentance by the horrors of desolation; or when he promised to the faithful the aid of heaven, as if he saw it already before his eyes; or again, when he looked with a mental vision, sharpened by religion, into a future that was veiled to the obtuse minds around him, and hence educed warnings and counsels which were verified by the event.

He appeared also as a worker of miracles. He himself did not hanker after such a reputation. He often enjoined the persons who were eye-witnesses of the things he performed, to be silent respecting them. When, on one occasion, a dying person was brought in her bed before the cell of Severinus, that she might obtain her recovery by his prayers, he said, with tears: "What great thing do you desire of one who is so little? I acknowledge myself to be altogether unworthy. If I could only obtain the forgiveness of my own sins!" But when they still persisted: "We believe if thou prayest, she will revive," he threw himself, weeping, on his knees. And when his prayer was heard, he said: "Ascribe nothing of all this to my influence. For this grace has required fervent faith, and this happens in many places, and among many nations, that it may be known that there is a God who does wonders in heaven and on earth, who revives the lost to salvation, and calls back the dead to life." We perceive how Severinus contemplated these facts as adapted to the peculiar character of these times, as means of education for these nations.

A monk, Bonosus, who laboured under a disease of the eyes, longed to obtain a cure through the prayers of Severinus. But he advised the monk rather to pray that his inward eye might be enlightened; and from the instructions often

imparted by the venerable man, he at last learned to strive rather to see with the eye of the mind than with that of the body, and to forget his sufferings in intercourse with God.

Two examples may serve to show how Severinus, in peculiar circumstances, was supported by Providence in his ministry, and how he exercised it. A great swarm of locusts settled on the country. When Severinus was asked for his prayers for deliverance from this plague, he said: "Have you not heard, what God commanded his sinful people by the prophet (Joel ii.): 'Turn ye to me with all your heart . . rend your heart and not your garment . . . . sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly?' Do all this, in order by works of repentance to escape the evils of the present time. Let no one of you now go to his fields, as if by human care you thought yourselves able to ward off the locusts." His words affected their hearts; the feelings of repentance were called forth universally. They all assembled in the church, acknowledged with tears their penitence for their sins, and distributed alms. Only one poor man, from anxiety about his land, while the rest were at church, was absent all day, in order to keep off the locusts, and only in the evening went with the rest to the church. But the next morning he found his field devoured by the locusts, while the other fields had escaped. This occurrence made a great impression, and Severinus availed himself of it, in order to exhort men to trust in God, and to impress upon them that care for the things of the kingdom should take precedence of everything else. But he also said to the rest: "It is reasonable that by your bounty this man should be supported during the present year, who by the punishment he has suffered has given you a lesson of humility." Accordingly, they contributed jointly to support the poor man for a year. When Gisa, the queen of the Rugii, had condemned some Roman subjects, who had been taken prisoners, to hard slave-labour, Severinus petitioned for their release. She made him a very angry answer, to the effect that he might stay shut up in his cell and pray, but she should act towards her slaves as she pleased. When Severinus heard this, he said: "I trust in my Lord Jesus Christ, that she will be forced by necessity to do that which, in her perverted state of mind, she will not do voluntarily." Not long afterwards the queen met with a punishment, which was the

natural consequence of her harshness and cruelty. She had confined in a narrow prison some goldsmiths who had to make some royal ornaments, in order to force them to labour beyond their strength. The queen's little son one day, child like, ran into the prison. The prisoners seized the boy, and threatened if any one ventured to come to them without assuring them of their freedom with an oath, that being wearied of life, they would first kill the child and then themselves. The queen, filled with alarm, now acknowledged the divine retribution; she went to them, gave the artizans their liberty, sent a messenger as quickly as possible to Severinus, entreated his forgiveness, and also returned to him the Roman prisoners.

When Severinus found himself near death, he invited the king of the Rugii and his cruel consort to come to him once more. He admonished him with undaunted freedom to act towards his subjects with the constant recollection of the account that he must render before the Lord. Then pointing with his hand to the king's heart, he asked Gisa, "Which do you love most,—this soul, or gold and silver?" And when she replied, that her husband was dearer to her than all the treasures of the world, he said: "Take care, then, not to oppress the innocent, that you may not expose your own power to destruction; for you often stand in the way of the king's clemency. I, your inferior in station, on the point of appearing before God, warn you to desist from your evil works, and to adorn your course with good works." In his last hours he assembled his monks around him, and in an affecting manner exhorted them to devote their lives to God. Then embracing them individually, he cheerfully took the Holy Supper, and desired them not to weep, but to sing psalms. But as they could not utter the words for very grief, he began himself to sing, "Praise the Lord in his holy place; let everything that has breath praise the Lord." These were his last words. After labouring successfully for thirty years in the midst of devastation, he died on the 1st of January, 482.*

* Neander's General Hist. v. 34—36. Standard Library Edition.—Tr.

CHAPTER III.

THE LABOURS OF PIOUS MEN AMONG THE FRANKS.

In ancient Gaul the Christian love of many pious bishops was manifested by their indefatigable and zealous labours during a period of great political commotions.

1. *Germanus of Auxerre* (*Antisiodorum*).

Such a man was Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, who held that office in A.D. 418, and of whose life and labours we would here present a sketch. It happened about ten years after his first entrance on the office, that along with Lupus, bishop of Troyes (of whom further mention will be made), he was called to Britain, in order to counteract the spread of the Pelagian doctrine, as being such as taught men to rely more on their own strength than on the grace of God, and by cherishing self-righteousness led men to misconceive the nature of true internal sanctification. They preached there, not only in the churches, but also in the streets and fields; wherever they came they collected crowds of people, to whom they announced the grace of the Lord. The Britons, who could obtain no protection from the rapidly sinking Roman empire, were then in great distress from a war with the wild Saxons and Picts. The two bishops were called into the British camp, and their presence infused as much courage and confidence into the despairing Britons, as if a whole host had come to their aid. It was the season of Lent; the bishops preached daily amidst the dangers of war, and many were induced by their sermons to apply for baptism. At Easter the churches were crowned with garlands, and ornamented for the celebration of baptism. The Britons peacefully enjoyed the Easter-festival; the Picts, indeed, had formed a plan to take advantage of their carelessness, and to fall upon them when they were unarmed. But their plot was discovered; Germanus himself pointed out to the Britons a valley inclosed by mountains, where they might wait the approach of the enemy. He himself went thither with them, and told them when he exclaimed *Hallelujah!* all to utter it aloud with him; they did so, and the united loud cry of the

numerous multitude, reverberated in the mountain echoes, made such a powerful impression on the Picts, that they were panic-struck, and betook themselves to flight.

At another time, on his return from a second visit to Britain, his aid was solicited by the inhabitants of the province of Brittany, that he would avert a great danger which threatened this province; for the renowned general Aëtius had commissioned Eoctor, king of the savage tribe of the Alani, to punish them on account of a rebellion. As the biographer of Germanus narrates, he placed himself alone, and an old man, in front of all the warlike people, and their pagan chief. He passed through the host peacefully till he reached the king. When he would not listen to him and was going to ride on, Germanus held him back. This boldness so astounded the barbarian warrior, that he yielded, and promised that he would spare the province till the bishop had tried whether he could obtain pardon for the province from the imperial government. Germanus to gain this object, set off for Italy. On his way he joined a company of poor artisans, who, after hiring themselves out as labourers in foreign parts, were returning home. Among them was a lame old man, whose strength was insufficient to cross a rapid stream wi h a heavy pack in company with the rest. Germanus took his baggage and carried it over, and afterwards the man himself.

As he was coming out of the opulent city of Milan, where he had been preaching many times, some poor people met him and asked alms. He asked the deacon who accompanied him how much they had left in their money-box; he answered, only three gold pieces. The bishop ordered him to distribute the whole among the poor. But whence shall we get our living to-day? asked the deacon; Germanus answered, God will feed his own poor. Give away what thou hast. But the deacon thought he would manage the business more prudently, so he gave only two pieces away, and kept one back. When they had proceeded some distance further, two persons on horseback came after them, to request a visit from him, in the name of a great landowner, who with his family, was suffering great affliction. The place lay out of the road he was travelling, and for that reason his companions begged him not to comply with the invitation; but he

answered: "The first thing with me, before everything else, is to do the will of my God." When the messengers heard that he had made up his mind to come, they presented him with the sum of two hundred solidi (a gold coin of those times worth originally about seventeen shillings and eight pence), which had been entrusted to them for Bishop Germanus. He gave them to his deacon, saying, "Take this and understand that you have withdrawn a hundred such pieces from the poor; for if you had given all to the poor, the Rewarder would have given us to-day three hundred pieces." His arrival spread universal joy over the estate; he visited with equal sympathy masters and servants on their sick-beds; he went even into the poorest hovels and strengthened all by his prayers.

Germanus met with universal respect in the imperial court at Ravenna, and easily accomplished the object of his visit. The empress Placidia sent to his lodgings a large silver vessel, full of costly provisions; Germanus divided the latter among his attendants, and kept the silver for himself, in order that he might use it for the benefit of the poor. He sent to the empress in return a wooden dish with coarse bread, such as he was used to eat. But the empress regarded it as a precious memorial, and afterwards caused the plate to be enchased with gold.

One morning during his stay at Ravenna, when he was conversing with the bishops on religious subjects, he said to them: "Brethren, I give you notice of my departure from this world. The Lord appeared to me last night in a dream, and gave me money for travelling; and when I inquired respecting the object of the journey, he answered: 'Fear not; I am not sending thee to a foreign country, but to thy fatherland, where thou wilt find eternal rest.'" The bishops endeavoured to interpret the dream as intimating his return to his earthly fatherland; but he would not be led into an error, for he said: "I well know *what* fatherland the Lord promises his servants." And to this heavenly fatherland he was soon removed. He died July 31, A.D. 448.

2. *Lupus of Troyes.*

Lupus, bishop of Troyes, the contemporary and friend of Germanus, rescued his city from threatening destruction by

his great influence over the savage conqueror Attila, king of the Huns, who spread terror everywhere before him, and in the year 451 invaded Gaul with his lawless hordes. The savage warrior was touched with such reverence for him that he relied upon his presence as an omen of success, and on that account took him with him on his march back and dismissed him with a request that he would pray for him. A letter from him induced a chief of the Alemanni to release prisoners without a ransom. He spent his revenues in supporting the poor, and especially in redeeming captives; he formed the fugitives under Attila's ravages, into a colony, in a mountainous district, where he himself resided for a considerable time.

A contemporary, Julianus, thus delineates the character of a pious bishop in this age:—"He converts many to God by a holy life and by holy preaching. He does nothing in an imperious manner but always acts with humility. By the striving of holy love he places himself on an equality with those who are subject to him. By his conduct and preaching he seeks not his own glory but the glory of Christ. All the honour which is shown him if he lives and teaches in a priestly manner, he always refers back to God. He consoles the dejected; he feeds the poor; he announces to those who are in despair the hope of the forgiveness of sins; he urges on those who are advancing in a right course; he spreads light among those who are wandering. Such a man is a minister of the Word; he understands God's voice, and is for others an oracle of the Holy Spirit." This description applies to

3. *Cæsarius of Arles.*

He was born in the district of Chalons-sur-Saône in A.D. 470. He appears to have been awakened early in life to vital Christianity by a pious education. When seven or eight years old it often happened that he would part with some of his clothes to the poor whom he happened to meet, and when he came home said that they were taken from him on the road. When growing up to manhood he entered the famous monastery of the Isle of Lerins (Lerina), in Provence, from which at that time emanated a spirit of deep, practical piety. The weak tender frame of young Cæsarius was so

exhausted by the exercises and severities which he imposed on himself, that the abbot insisted on his visiting the city of Arles for the re-establishment of his health.

In this country there were at that time many pious females who employed their means in alleviating the sufferings of this season of devastation, and assisted the worthy bishops in labours of love. Such an one was Synagria, who because she used the church as a stock-in-trade for accomplishing every good object, was called the treasure of the church. When Epiphanius, bishop of Pavia, a contemporary of Cæsarius, came to France, with a sum, given to him by Theodoric, king of the East Goths, to purchase the freedom of thousands of the inhabitants of desolated Italy, who had been dragged away as captives into slavery, and the amount was not sufficient for so great a multitude, this pious woman added what was requisite from her own purse.

Another pious female of this class, at that time in Arles, was Gregoria, who had united herself in these labours of love with a near relation, Firminus. They took joint charge of young Cæsarius in order to bring him up. They introduced him to the bishop of the city, who soon perceived what he was capable of, and placed him for instruction in a monastery on a neighbouring island. With all his high estimation of monasticism, how far he was from confounding means and end, from attributing a value to asceticism in the absence of the genuine Christian disposition, of true internal holiness, is apparent from his exhortations to the monks. "What use is it," he says, "if we are only as to our bodies in a place of rest, and unrest continues to pervade our hearts? if the show of rest is spread over our exterior while all within is in a tumult? for we are not come to this place in order to make use of the world and to enjoy perfect rest in all manner of superfluities. You must know, my brethren, that it avails nothing if we mortify our bodies with fasting and watching, and our hearts are not made better, or if we take no care of our internal state. In vain we flatter ourselves with crucifying the flesh, if our outward man is tamed by austerities and the inner man is not cured of its evil desires. It is as if any one made a statue gilt on the outside, or if a house built with splendid art was painted outside with the most beautiful colours, and within it was full of serpents and scorpions.

Of what avail is it that thou torturest thy body if thy heart is not made better?" In another exhortation he says, "Let us renounce the sweetness of earthly life and think daily on eternal life, and let us strive to attain a delightful foretaste of that blessedness with hearts purified from the bitterness of worldly desires. Let us now serve our Lord and God with that joyfulness with which he invites us to come by his assistance to the enjoyment of his gifts."

In the year 501 he became bishop of Arles; he committed the temporal concerns of his church to others, and devoted himself to the cure of souls and attention to religious instruction. This appears to us the highest duty of a bishop, and he was profoundly imbued with a sense of his responsibilities. Often when the clergy from other parts visited him, who did not attach sufficient importance to the religious instruction of their flocks, he endeavoured to impress them with their obligations in this respect. "Brother!" he would say to many a one—"think like a prudent pastor of the talent committed to thee, that thou return it twofold to Him who lent it to thee. Hear what the prophet says, 'Woe to me! that I have kept silence.' Hear what the apostle says, filled with fear, 'Woe to me! if I preach not the gospel.' Take care, lest thou occupiest the pulpit to the exclusion of another, and it be said of thee as of the Scribes, 'They have taken the key of knowledge—they enter not in themselves—and hinder those that are entering in,'—those, perhaps, who could have promoted far better the cause of the Lord." He urged his younger clergy to ask him frequent questions respecting the interpretation of the Scriptures. "I know well," he would often say to them, "that ye do not understand all things. Why do you not ask that ye may learn to understand? Ye ought to stir us up by your questions that we might be forced to search, in order to be able to impart to you sweet spiritual nourishment." His zeal and earnestness in the publication of the Divine Word are shown in these words of a sermon: "I ask you, my brethren or sisters, —tell me—which appears to you more important, the Word of God or the body of Christ? If you would answer the truth, you must certainly say that the Word of God is not of less importance than the body of Christ. Hence we ought to apply the same attention which we exercise in the

participation of the body of Christ, that nothing of it may fall from our hands to the ground—that the Word of God when imparted to us may not escape out of our hearts while we are thinking or speaking of something else. I should like to know if at the hour when the Word is begun to be announced—if we wished to distribute precious stones or golden rings, whether our daughters would not wish to remain and receive them. There can be no doubt they would be very eager to receive such presents. But we have no ornaments for the body to present, and on that account are not gladly listened to. And it is not right that we who impart spiritual things should be regarded with indifference; for he who gladly hears the will of God, may be assured that he receives golden ornaments for the soul, from its native land in Paradise. If a mother wished to adorn her daughter with her own hands, and she despised the ornaments, and shifted herself hither and thither, so that her mother could not adorn her as she wished, would she not deserve to be punished? Regard me therefore as the mother of your souls; think, that I am adorning you in order that you may appear without spot or wrinkle before the judgment-seat of the Eternal. We collect for you pearls from our fatherland in Paradise, and we desire in this world no other reward than to see you receive with joy what is offered to you, and with God's help, according to your powers, be complete in good works." And in another sermon he says: "It is not a small thing which the Holy Ghost threatens the priest of the Lord by the mouths of the prophets,—'If thou givest the wicked not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, his blood will I require at thy hand.' (Ezek. iii. 18.) 'Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression.' (Isa. lviii. 1.)—And those words so terrible to negligent priests,—'Thou shouldst have taken my money to the exchangers, and when I returned I should have received my own with interest.' And further, 'Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.' This is the doom that awaits the negligent priest, who will not publish the word of God diligently."

At a time when the unsettled state of the nations threatened a relapse into barbarism, preaching was a peculiarly important instrument for the Christian culture of the people

But it was necessary often to apply a certain force to rule men who in proportion as they needed preaching were less able to value it, in order to insure their listening to it. Thus at the council, held at Agde, under the presidency of Bishop Cæsarius, it was ordained that persons on Sundays should attend divine worship to the close, till the benediction had been pronounced. Once when Cæsarius, after the reading of the Gospel, saw several persons hastening out of church, he ran after them and said, "What are you doing, my children? Why do you allow yourselves to be seduced by evil counsel? Listen attentively, for the sake of your souls, to the word of exhortation. You will not be able to act in this manner at the day of judgment. I exhort you; I adjure you; hasten not away, and be not deaf. I would not be guilty, on my part, of silence."

It is evident that in such times as those we have been describing, the preacher, in order to communicate a great and general blessing, was obliged to condescend to the standpoint of the uneducated multitude, and especially to use language that would be easily understood by that class. The contemporary and teacher of Cæsarius, Julianus Pomerius, of Mauritania, lays special stress on this point, and says:* "The teacher of the church must not seek to distinguish himself by regular oratory, that it may not seem that his

* Nec vero se per imperitiam pontifex excusabit, quasi propterea docere non valeat quod ei sufficiens et luculentus sermo non suppetat; quando nulla alia sacerdotis doctrina debet esse quam vita; satisque auditores possint proficere, si a doctoribus suis quod vident spiritualiter fieri, hoc sibi etiam simpliciter audiant prædicari, dicente apostolo, *Et si imperitus sermone, sed non scientia* (2 Cor. xi. 6). Unde datur intelligi, quod non se debeat ecclesiæ doctor de accurati sermonis ostentatione jactare, ne videatur ecclesiam Dei non velle ædificare, sed magis se quantæ sit eruditionis ostendere. Non igitur in verborum splendore, sed in operum virtute totam prædicandi fiduciam ponat; non vocibus delectetur populi adclamantis sibi, sed fletibus; nec plausum a populo studeat expectare, sed gemitum. Hoc specialiter doctor ecclesiasticus elaboret, quo fiant qui audiunt eum, sanis disputationibus meliores, non vana assentatione fautores. Lacrymas quos vult a suis auditoribus fudi, ipse primitus fundat, et sic eos compunctione sui cordis accendat. Tam simplex et apertus, etiamsi minus latinus, disciplinatus tamen, et gravis sermo debet esse pontificis; ut ab intelligentia sui nullos, quamvis imperitos, excludat; sed in omnium audientium pectus cum quædam delectatione descendat.—Julian. Pomerius, *De vit. contempl.* lib. i. cap. 23.

principal object is to make a display of his superior culture. Let him not be delighted with the plaudits of Christian people, but with their tears; let him not wait for approbation, but for the sighs of contrite hearts. The great aim of the teacher should be, that his hearers may be made better by his instructions, not that they should give him empty applause. Let him first shed such tears as he wishes his hearers to shed, and let him affect their hearts by the contrition of his own. The discourse of the bishop should be so simple and clear, though not in Latin of classical purity, yet well arranged and valuable, that he may be understood even by the ignorant, and enter into the hearts of all with a certain acceptableness. Finally, it is one thing with the rhetorician, and another thing with the Christian teacher. The former seeks for the reputation of an artistically elaborated oration, with all the powers of eloquence; the latter seeks to advance the honour of Christ, with simple language, such as is employed in common life."

Cæsarius followed the principles here laid down, as he says in one of his sermons: "If I wished to expound to you the Holy Scriptures according to the art of the fathers, the spiritual nourishment would reach only a few better-educated persons; the rest of the people must suffer hunger. Hence, I humbly request, that such persons will be pleased patiently to listen to country words, if only the whole church of the Lord may receive spiritual nourishment by such rude speech; since the uneducated cannot raise themselves to the height of the educated, the latter must submit, and condescend to the ignorance of the former; for the educated can well understand what is said to the simple, but the simple cannot comprehend what is addressed to the superior class." His biographer says of him,—God had bestowed on him such grace to speak on divine things, that he knew how to make use of whatever was presented to his eyes, as a parable for the edification of his hearers. An example we have already quoted shows us his method and skill in this respect. We would here quote a passage from a sermon delivered in the country at a visitation, when he combats the excuse, sometimes urged, of ignorance in religion. "Tell me who has shown you how to prune your vines, at what time you should plant new stocks? Who has told you this? You have seen or heard it, or have

asked the best vine-dresser how you ought to cultivate your vineyard; why are you not as anxious about your soul as you are about your vineyard?* Pay attention, my brethren, I beseech you. There are two kinds of fields—the field of God, and the field of man. You have your field;—God has his. Your field is your land, God's field is your soul. Is it right that you should cultivate your own field, and let God's field lie waste? Does God deserve that at our hands, that we should neglect the soul which is so dear to him? With our lands we shall only have a few days in this world; therefore, we ought to pay so much greater attention to our souls. God has entrusted our souls to us as his field, which it is our duty to cultivate with all possible diligence.

* Adtendite, rogo vos, fratres. Duo genera agrorum sunt; unus ager est Dei, alter est hominis. Habes tu villam tuam; habet et Deus suam. Villa tua est terra tua; villa Dei est anima tua. Numquid justum est ut villam tuam colas, et Dei villam desertam dimittas? Si colis terram tuam, cole et animam tuam. Villam tuam vis componere, et Dei villam desertam dimittere? Numquid hoc justum est, fratres? Numquid a nobis hoc meritur Deus, ut animam nostram quam satis ille diligit negligamus? Quomodo adtendis villam tuam cultam, et gaudes, cur non adtendis animam tuam desertam, et plangis? De agro villæ nostræ paucis diebus victuri sumus in mundo; ibi ergo, id est, in anima nostra majus studium debemus semper impendere. Animam nostram quasi villam suam nobis dignatus est committere Deus, ut illam omni studio debeamus excolere. Totis ergo viribus cum Dei adjutorio laboremus, ut cum Deus ad agrum suum, hoc est, ad animam nostram venire voluerit, totum cultum, totum compositum, totum ordinatum inveniat, messem inveniat non spinas, vinum inveniat non acetum, triticum magis quam lolium. . . . . Non est grande quod a nobis requirit Deus, non durum, non asperum. Clamat tibi in conscientia tua æterna justitia; quomodo gubernas agrum tuum, guberna et cor tuum; quomodo colis villam tuam, cole et animam tuam; quomodo superfluos palmites tollis de vite tua, sic malos affectus tolle de anima tua. Præcidis de vite tua, quod malum est; incide de anima tua quod iniquum est. Quomodo qui vitem suam uno anno potare voluerit, ipso anno abundantius exhibet, et postea sine fructu sterilis remanebit; sic et qui malas cogitationes et mala desideria non tollet de anima sua, videtur offerre fructum de rapinis et fraudibus in anno vitæ suæ quo vivit in hoc mundo; sed postea sterilis remanebit in æternum. . . . . Quomodo in vite tua totos oculos superfluos amputas et duos aut tres qui sunt legitimi derelinquis; sic et in anima tua omnia desideria quæ res alienas male respiciunt et pessime concupiscunt Spiritus sancti gladio et crucis falce debes incidere, et hoc tantum unde justitia vel misericordia cernitur reservare.—*Cæsarius Arelat.* August. ed. Ben. tom. v. appd. serm. ccciii. § 5, 6, 7.

Let us therefore labour with all our powers, depending on God's assistance, that when God shall inspect his field, that is, our souls, he may find the ground well cultivated, the harvest ready, and no weeds. It is not a great or a hard thing that God requires of us: eternal justice calls to thee in thy conscience, 'As thou carest for thy field, so care for thy soul; as thou cuttest off the superfluous shoots from thy vine, so take away the bad inclinations from thy soul; as the man who will not prune his vine for a whole twelvemonth, may obtain for this one year a larger crop, but afterwards the tree yields nothing, so it appears that he who does not clear his soul of evil thoughts and inclinations, may by violence or fraud obtain fruit for the one year of this mortal life—but then he will remain unfruitful to all eternity."

The sermons which Cæsarius delivered in the course of his visitations throughout his diocese, both in cities and in the country, vividly expressed his paternal love for all the parts of his great episcopal charge, and his sorrow that his numerous engagements, under the painful circumstances to which we have already referred, prevented him from visiting them more frequently. In one of these discourses he thus speaks:—"If these troublous times permitted, I would visit you not only once but twice or three times a year, in order to gratify my desire as well as your own of seeing one another. But while the heart longs for it, the distresses of the present time will not allow it. Yet it can injure neither you nor me that we see one another so seldom in the body, since we are always present to one another in affection. In travelling through this world, even if we were in the same city, we could not always be together. There is another city where good Christians will never be separated from each other." And in another discourse he says, "I bless God that he has graciously conveyed your love to me, although under many engagements. God knows that if I were able to come to you twice or three times a year, it would not be enough for my desires; for where is there a father who does not wish to see his son, and especially a good and faithful son, frequently?"

Cæsarius also took great pains that the people should not be destitute of preaching in all parts of the country. For this purpose he exerted his great influence in the management of ecclesiastical affairs in his native land, at the coun-

cils held in France. We perceive this influence when, in the second council held at Vaison, A.D. 529, it was ordained that there should be preaching constantly in the village churches; that the clergy in the country should rightly instruct the young church-readers in the Scriptures, and train them to be their successors.*

It was his zealous endeavour that occupation with divine truths should be felt to be the personal concern of every Christian, and that especially every one should learn to draw for himself from the Word of God. He combated the pretexts by which men sought to evade this requirement, and to indulge their frivolous worldly dispositions. Thus he says in one of his sermons: "I beseech you, dearest brethren, that what by divine grace you willingly receive in these sermons, —that all that you have heard you will deliver again with great zeal to your neighbours and relations, who cannot, or

* As the rights of the clergy in these districts, until they were enlarged by the influence of Cæsarius, were very confined, so probably in many parts the village congregations could only enjoy religious instruction at the episcopal visitations. It was now provided that if the clergy were ill, the congregation should not be entirely destitute of preaching; for a deacon was ordered to read something from older homilies. We see here the clerical prejudice combated admirably, as if to preach sermons was something too high for deacons; yet the office was committed to deacons of reading the gospels in the churches. "If the deacons are worthy to read what Christ has spoken in the gospels, why should they be held unworthy publicly to read the expositions of the fathers?" In the biography of Cæsarius we are told that he introduced his presbyters and deacons to preach, in order that the congregation might lose nothing in case he was prevented by illness, and that he said: "What! If the words of the Lord, of prophets, and apostles, are read by presbyters and deacons, ought they not to be permitted to read the words of Ambrose or of Augustin, or of my insignificant self? The servant is not greater than his Lord. Those who have a right to read the gospels, methinks, are indeed authorized to read in the churches the sermons of the servants of God or their expositions of Holy Writ."

"I have done my part. Those bishops who neglect to make this arrangement will have to give an account at the day of judgment. Yet no one is so hardened in his own mind that if God calls to him, 'Cry out boldly, spare not,' he would not call himself, and would hinder others from calling. He would fear those words of the prophet Isaiah (lvi. 10): 'They are dumb dogs—they cannot bark.' For all the souls which go astray through the fault of the silent priest, he will be answerable."

perhaps will not, come with you to church, or to those who, if they come, quickly go away. For as I should blame myself if I neglected to say it to you, so must you fear, if you do not so retain in your memory what you hear as to be able to impart it to others, that you will have to answer for your neglect. And on this account seek to perform, by the help of divine grace, what the apostle Paul enjoins in Gal. vi. 1: 'If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness;' an injunction which concerns not the clergy alone, but also the laity." And in another sermon he says: "Let no one, my beloved brethren, seek to excuse himself by saying, 'I have no time to read, and therefore I cannot become acquainted with God's commands or fulfil them.' And let no one of you say, 'I cannot read, therefore it will not be reckoned against me when I fail in keeping the divine commands.' That is a vain and worthless excuse. In the first place, if a person cannot himself read Holy Writ, he can easily get it read to him. And he who can read, ought he not to find time to read the Scriptures? Who need sleep so much in the long winter nights, that he may not spend at least three hours in reading the Bible or in hearing it read? Consider it well. I tell you what you yourselves must well know. We know many merchants who, because they can neither read nor write, hire clerks, and acquire great gains while they allow their accounts to be kept by others. And if those persons who can neither read nor write, employ clerks in order to gain earthly wealth, why do you not request some one for hire to read the Scriptures to you, that you may be able to gain eternal wealth? I beseech and exhort you, therefore, my brethren, that whoever can read, let him frequently read the Holy Scriptures; and he who cannot read, let him listen attentively when another reads them. For the light of the soul and its eternal nourishment is no other than the Word of God, without which the soul can neither see nor live. For as our body dies if it receives no food, so our soul pines away if it does not receive the Word of God. 'I am a rustic, and am always occupied with earthly employments; I can neither read the Holy Scriptures nor hear them read.' How many rustics, both men and women, learn the devil s

songs by heart, and sing them. They can retain and use what the devil teaches, and can they not retain what Christ teaches?"

He often said to those who came to him, "Believe not that you do enough when you nourish the souls of your relations and friends with the word which we preach to you. I testify to you before God and the holy angels that you will be answerable for the salvation of your lowest menials, if you do not impart to them what we preach as well as to your friends and relations. The menial is subject to you, according to existing earthly relations, but he is not dependent on you by an eternal bond."

At all times the aim of Cæsarius was apparent in his sermons to counterwork the tendency to the external in religion, which at this time was gaining ground; to direct men's attention to that one thing which was needful for the inner life; to cut off their dependence on external works. As a scholar of Augustin, on whose writings he had evidently formed himself, he always referred men to the love of God, as the only source of true goodness. "Whatever good works," he said, "any one may do, it will be all to no purpose, unless true love be in him—love which extends not only to friends, but to enemies." He quotes 1 Cor. xiii. 3. "And since selfishness is the root of all evil, and love the root of all good, I ask, what does it profit a man that he has a thousand branches with the most beautiful or charming flowers or fruits, if the living and true root is not in him? For as when the root of selfishness is torn up, all the shoots that spring from it at once wither and die; so on the other hand, those who have allowed the root of love in themselves to die, have no means left for attaining eternal life." And in another sermon he says: "Wherein ought we to follow the Lord's example? Is it in raising the dead or walking on the sea? No, surely. But in this: in being meek and lowly of heart; in loving not only our friends but also our enemies. Whoever says that he lives in him must walk as he walked. How did Christ walk? On the cross he prayed for his enemies, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Are they insane,—possessed by evil spirits? On that account we must rather pray that they may be freed than that they should be condemned."—"Fasting, watching,

prayer, alms, celibacy, faith,—all avail nothing without love. True love endures in adversity, is moderate in prosperity, is steadfast under severe sufferings, is joyful in doing good, in temptation is sure, among true brethren full of pleasantness, among false brethren full of power; innocent amidst plots, sighs under injustice, is refreshed by the truth, is humbly obedient in Peter, reproves freely in Paul (Gal. ii.), confesses humanly in Christians, forgives divinely in Christ. True love is the soul of all the Scriptures, the fruit of faith, the wealth of the poor, the life of the dying.* Therefore faithfully guard love; love the highest good with all your heart and with all the powers of your soul, for the Lord is kind and sweeter than all sweetness. In communion with Him everything offensive is strange; in intercourse with him all deception is absent." "My brethren, what is sweeter than love? Who does not know it? Taste and see. Hear what the Apostle says, 'God is love. He who loveth, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.' What can there be more delightful? Whoever does not know it, let him hear what the Psalmist says (Psa. xxxiv. 9), 'O taste and see that the Lord is good.' God therefore is love. If thou hast love, thou hast God; and if thou hast God, what more canst thou want? Perhaps thou believest that he is rich whose chests are full of gold, and that he is not rich whose soul is full of God? But it is not so, my brethren; only *he* is rich to whom God has shown the grace to dwell in him. How can the meaning of Holy Writ be hidden from thee, if love, that is, God himself, animates thee? What good works wilt thou not be able to accomplish when thou carriest the fountain of good works in thy heart? What adversary wilt thou fear, if thou art

* Sine caritate nec jejunia, nec vigiliæ, nec orationes, nec eleemosynæ, nec fides atque virginitas ullum hominem adjuvare valent. Radix omnium bonorum est caritas. Vera caritas in adversitatibus tolerat, in prosperitatibus temperat, in duris passionibus fortis, in bonis operibus hilaris, in tentatione tutissima, inter veros fratres dulcissima, inter falsos potentissima, inter insidias innocens, inter iniquitates gemens, in veritate respirans, casta in Susanna in virum, in Anna post virum, in Maria præter virum, humilis in Petro ad obediendum, in Paulo ad arguendum, humana in Christianis ad confitendum, divina in Christo ad ignoscendum. Vera enim caritas anima est omnium scripturarum fidei fructus, divitiæ pauperum, vita morientium.—*Cæsarius Arelat.* Hom. 10. Galland. Bibl. Patr. tom. xi. § 16.

worthy to have God the Lord within thee? As long as the root within thee is unchanged, thou canst not bring forth the right fruit; in vain thou promisest good with thy lips, if thou canst not bring it to perfection as long as thou carriest not the root of good in thy heart. Christ plants one root in the heart of believers; the Evil Spirit plants another in the hearts of the high-minded, and thus one is planted in heaven and the other in hell. But many a one will say, 'If this root is planted in the hearts of believers, but believers certainly appear to be still in the world, how is that root planted in heaven?' Wilt thou know how? Because the hearts of believers are in heaven; because they are daily raised to heaven (for when the priest says, 'Raise your heart!' the congregation quietly answers, 'We have raised our heart to the Lord), because the apostle says, 'Our conversation is in heaven.' For the attainment of eternal life, God does not send us on laborious pilgrimages to the east or to the west; he leads us back to ourselves; what he has granted us by his grace, that he requires from us; for he himself says in the gospel, 'The kingdom of God is within you.'" And again, "The Lord has not said, 'Go to the east and seek for righteousness; sail to the west in order to receive forgiveness of sins.' But what says he? 'Forgive thine enemies, and it shall be forgiven thee. Give and it shall be given thee.' God requires nothing of thee that lies out of thyself. God leads thee to thyself and to thy conscience. In thyself has he deposited that which he requires of thee. Thou needest not seek the means of healing thy wounds at a distance. Thou canst find the forgiveness of thy sins when thou wilt, in the recesses of thy heart."

The life and preaching of this man of God were cast in the same mould; the soul of his sermons was also the soul of his life. It is said of him that he never prayed merely for himself; that when he met with injustice from his enemies, he was wont to say nothing but 'May God pardon thy sins! May God take thy sins away! May God punish thy sins in order that they may not cleave to thee! May God correct thy errors in this world!' He prayed for his enemies with the utmost fervency. His inward state was expressed in his outward mien. A heavenly repose was always spread over his countenance, so that according to the Scripture (Prov. xvii.

22, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine,") his joyful heart spread pleasure over his whole life, as the scholar who wrote his life expresses himself.

Although Cæsarius often exhorted earnestly to beneficence and almsgiving in those times of distress, yet he also spoke with great impressiveness against the delusion of those persons who converted almsgiving into an external legal righteousness, and thought by means of it to make reparation for all their sins. Thus in a sermon at the feast of Epiphany, he says: "Those wise men from the East presented costly gifts to the Lord Christ; O that you would present to him your souls! present to him spiritual gifts, that is, yourselves; for God loves yourselves far more than your property. There are many who give alms and yet do not cease from sinning. These act as if they would present their property to God, and themselves to the devil. But God has no fellowship with the devil, and therefore with God's help you must banish from yourselves extortion, luxury, hatred, pride, all evil, whatever it may be, so that your Creator may possess you altogether."

He also spoke against the delusion of those persons who, attributing a magical power to the mere sign of the cross, were only confirmed so much the more in their sins. "I beseech you, my beloved brethren," he said, "let us carefully reflect why we are Christians, and bear the cross of Christ on our foreheads. For we must know that it is not enough for us to have received Christian names, if we do not perform Christian works. As the Lord himself says in the gospel, 'Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?' If thou pretendest to be one of Christ's soldiers, and always markest thyself with Christ's cross, and yet dost not give alms according to thy ability, art not willing to know anything of love, honesty and chastity, the Christian name will be of no use to thee. Christ's sign, the cross of Christ, is a great thing, and therefore must serve as a sign of a great and precious thing. For what avails it, if thou sealest with a golden ring, and yet under that seal carefully guardest mere rubbish? What avails it if we bear Christ's sign on our brow and in our mouth, and yet harbour sin in our souls? Who ever thinks evil, speaks evil, does evil, and will not improve himself,—his sin, if he makes the sign of the cross on himself, will not be less but greater. For many per-

sons when they are about to commit theft or adultery, make the sign of the cross if they happen to stumble, and yet do not refrain from the evil deed; and the wretched men are not aware that in so doing they rather drive evil spirits into themselves than expel them. But whoever, with God's help, keeps sin at a distance, and strives to think and to perform what is good, he has a right to make the sign of the cross on his lips, since he strives to perform works which are worthy of receiving Christ's sign."

Thus also at the consecration of churches he endeavoured to turn the thoughts of the congregation from the outward sanctuary to the inward sanctuary in the hearts of men; for example: "As often as we celebrate the festival of the consecration of an altar or a church, and lead a holy life, so will everything which is designed to be effected by the temples made with hands be accomplished by the spiritual building in our hearts. For he did not utter falsehood who said, 'The temple of God is holy, which temple are ye;' and 'know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost?' But since without any merit on our part we have attained by God's grace to be a temple of God, let us, with his help, strive as much as we can that the Lord find nothing in his temple, that is, in ourselves, which may offend the eye of the Divine Majesty,—that the habitation of our heart may be purified from sins, and filled with virtues, closed against the devil and opened to Christ." In an Advent sermon he says: "Think, my brethren, if a man of power or rank wished to celebrate his own birthday or his son's, how anxious he would be for several days beforehand to purify his house from all that is unsightly: the house is whitewashed, the floors swept, and the rooms decorated with flowers. Everything which can contribute to the joy of the soul or the delight of the body, is carefully provided. But if thou makest such great provision for thy own or thy son's birthday, what preparations oughtest thou to make for the birthday of thy Lord? Strive, therefore, with all thy powers that God may not find in thy soul what thou wouldst not find in thy house. If Christ sees thee prepared for the celebration of his birthday, he will himself come to thee, and not only visit thy soul, but also rest in it, and dwell for ever there. How blessed is the soul which so seeks to regulate its life by God's help, that it is capable of

receiving Christ into itself as its guest and inmate, and on the contrary, how miserable is the soul which has so defiled itself with sin that Christ does not begin to rest in it, but the devil begins to rule."

As to prayer also, he pointed out the difference between the appearance and the reality: "Above all things we must in stillness and quiet pray to God; he hears even our sighs, as was the case with Hannah (1 Sam. i. 13): 'Only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard.' Let us therefore pray with sighing, as in that passage (Psa. xxxviii. 9), 'I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.' Let us, therefore, so pray, that not our voice but our inward soul may cry to God. And let every one with God's help drive away from his soul, before he kneels down to pray, all foreign thoughts, that it may be inflamed with the glow of the Holy Spirit; let him consume everything sinful by the fire of contrition or of prayer. For to whatever object man directs his soul in the time of prayer, that he puts in the place of God—that he appears to make his God, and to worship as his Lord. Behold! how sore a bondage! that our tongue as it were speaks to God, and the whole tendency of our soul is towards earth and earthly things!"

As it was so important to Cæsarius to make Christianity and Christian devotion the common concern of all persons belonging to the church, so instead of church-singing conducted by singers consisting of ecclesiastics, he introduced choral singing in which all took part; and for this, besides the Latin language which was prevalent in Gaul, the Greek was used, which through the colonies from the East prevailed in many parts of Southern France. The devotional psalmody of his flock gave Cæsarius much pleasure; yet he regarded it only as a means, and warned them against an overvaluation of the means in all external things. He always directed attention to the grand object, the promotion of a holy disposition. "It is impossible for me to express in words," he says in a sermon, "the joy that your devotion gives me. For these several years it has been the wish of my heart that the blessed Lord would incline you to this practice of psalmody. Hence, strive before all things that the Holy Spirit which resounds from your lips, not only in prayer but also in holy thoughts, may dwell in your hearts. It is indeed good and well pleasing

to God when the tongue sings believingly; but it is not truly good unless the life agrees with the tongue. Especially pay regard to the internal meaning of the Psalms. When you sing, 'Let the proud be ashamed' (Psa. cxix. 78), then seek to flee from pride. When we sing, 'Lo, they that are far from thee shall perish' (Psa. lxxiii. 27), let us seek to avoid all evil desires. When we sing, 'Blessed is he who meditates in the law of the Lord day and night;' (Psa. i. 2) let us avoid all useless and unbecoming language as devilish poison, and frequently read the Holy Scriptures, or if we cannot read them ourselves, let us gladly and frequently seek to hear those who do read them."

He often warns most earnestly against whatever seemed to make men at ease in their sins; the practice of many to indulge in their pleasures, with the hope that there would be time enough on a death-bed to repent and receive absolution; or the notion of others that they would be sure of salvation if on a sick-bed they adopted the tonsure and dress of the monks; or again, the excuse of others that they could not in their youth renounce the world, and that therefore they were exempted from the labour of true conversion. Against such delusions Cæsarius says, "We need not hesitate to express what awaits such an one, who habitually leads a wicked life and puts off repentance to the close of life, and who sins in the hope that by instantaneous repentance he may obtain forgiveness of all his sins;—a man who yet, after submitting to the penance enjoined by the church, does not restore ill-gotten gain, does not forgive his enemies from the heart, does not in his heart resolve, in case he recovers, to repent all his life with great contrition and humility;—we need not say it—the Lord himself has said it in the gospel most distinctly what such an one has to expect; for he says, 'If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses.' How can that sinner be forgiven who is not willing to forgive? Or what can he expect to receive who has not been willing to give? The Lord will say of those who have given no alms, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire—for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat.' I cannot admit such a man into the number of the penitent; but God, who knows all hearts and who will judge every one according to his deserts, *he* knows

with what faith and with what disposition such an one has submitted to penance."*

"When we exhort all to repentance, perhaps one of you thinks, 'I am a young married man, how can I adopt the tonsure or a monk's dress?' Let him know that this is not what we preach, that men should change their dress rather than their morals. For true conversion is enough of itself, without a change of dress. A clerical dress without good works can be of no avail, but will incur the righteous judgment of God." And in another passage he says: "But perhaps some one thinks he has committed such grievous sins that he can no longer deserve God's mercy. Far be that from the thoughts of any sinner. O man, whoever thou art, thou lookest at the multitude of thy sins, and thinkest not of the almighty power of the heavenly Physician. For since God will have mercy because he is good, and is able because

* The question of the validity of a death-bed repentance was at that time a frequent subject of debate. The pious Faustus, bishop of Rhegium (Riez), in Provence, in the warmth of his zeal for practical Christianity, and in order to give no pretext for security in a sinful life, denied all value to this repentance. "Since God does not allow himself to be mocked, that person deceives himself who only begins when he is half dead to seek for life, and first resolves on the service of God when all the powers of soul and body are wanting for this service. That man appears to mock God who, when he was able, neglected to go to the physician, and begins to be willing to go when he is no longer able." Faustus, very justly and very suitably for his times, here disputes the value of a faith not manifested by works. This epistle of Faustus disturbed the Burgundian king, Gundobad, who took an interest in religious subjects, as well as the epistle of Avitus, to whom he proposed many theological questions, and he asked the above-mentioned Avitus, bishop of Vienne, respecting its meaning. He correctly maintained that if a sincere conversion proceeding from repentance and faith took place even in the last moments of life, it could not be in vain. He appealed to Matt. xx. 9, Luke xxiii. 40. Avitus at the same time spoke as strongly against the value of a hypocritical repentance. But he unjustly opposed what Faustus had said against the worth of mere faith; for Faustus was not here speaking of that faith which is the foundation of all spiritual blessings, a living faith, but that dead and merely apparent faith which is no work of the Spirit, and can bring with it no kind of spiritual good. But with the nothingness of such a faith the new converts to Christianity could not be too much impressed.

Cæsarius of Arles, as well as Avitus, allowed the possibility of a valid repentance in the hour of death, but presented in a stronger light its indispensable requisites and its difficulties.

he is almighty—that man closes against himself the door of the divine mercy, who believes that God either will not or cannot have mercy on him; he mistrusts either God's goodness or his power. Let no one therefore despair of God's mercy: only let him not delay to seek reconciliation with God, that it may not be too late, if sin has already become habitual, and lest he should no longer be able to free himself from the snares of the devil, if he would. But perhaps many a one may say, 'I fill an official situation; I have a wife: and how can I repent?' As if, when we advised to repentance, we said that a person must cut off his hair, and not rather renounce sin, that he should change his dress rather than his disposition. Whoever seeks to deceive rather than to excuse himself by such hypocrisy, let him recollect that neither royal dignity nor royal dress prevented King David from repenting." While he combated the delusion of those persons who supposed that men must repent only of grosser and open sins; while he wished to show that every Christian, even the holiest, always needed repentance, —he reckoned among the minor sins, that persons should neglect to visit prisoners or the sick at the right time, or to be reconciled to enemies, or that any one should unnecessarily irritate his neighbour, his wife, his son or his servant. If among men who were disposed to make religion consist in a dead faith, and in the observance of ceremonies, he justly insisted on the necessity of good works as the fruits of faith, and placed before their eyes the requirements of God's holy law in all its strictness, yet he was by no means a legal preacher who can only kill, but not make alive. He pointed men not to their own power, but sought rather to bring them to a sense of their own inability, in order that they might learn to have recourse to the eternal source of all power to which he directed them. After representing what belonged to a holy life, he says: "All this, my brethren, appears to be laborious, until it becomes habitual, and, to express it more correctly, it will be held to be impossible as long as we believe that it is to be accomplished by human power. But if man is convinced that it can be received from God and accomplished by God's grace, then it will no longer appear as something hard and laborious, but as light and easy, according to the words of the Lord, 'My yoke is easy and

my burden is light.' " He calls on men to confide, in their conflict with evil, on the power of the Redeemer, as when he says: "How can it ever come to pass that we should be afraid of the devil, if we are joined with God? Hast thou such a leader in the conflict, and dost thou fear the devil? Dost thou fight under such a king, and dost thou doubt of victory? True, Satan daily opposes thee; but Christ is present: the one will press thee to the ground, but the other will raise thee up; the one will kill thee, but the other will make thee alive; but be comforted, my brother! Christ is better able to raise thee up than Satan to keep thee to the ground." And in another sermon, he says: "Because we were little, He made himself little. Because we lay dead, He, the benevolent Physician, bowed himself down; for truly, he who will not bow himself down cannot raise the prostrate."

Owing to the disturbances which at that time befell France, and the frequent marches through it of nations who were either pagans, or had not long been converted to Christianity —superstitious practices that proceeded from heathenism again became prevalent, such as the regarding certain things as omens, the custom of not undertaking any business on days that were considered unlucky, &c. Cæsarius often spoke against such notions. "Let no one," he said, "regard on what day he goes from home, or what day he returns—for the Lord has made all days; as the Scripture says, It was the first, and the second, and the third, and the fourth, and the fifth, and the sixth day, and the Sabbath, and of each it is said, God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good. Guard against that not only impious, but ridiculous observation of *sneezing*. But as often as you hasten anywhere, make the sign of the cross in the name of Christ, repeat the creed believingly, and undertake your journey, certain of God's aid." He carefully warned his flock against misunderstanding such passages in the Bible which might be perverted to favour superstitious usages by persons, from ignorance of biblical language and a right interpretation of Scripture; as, for example, on the passage 2 Kings iv. 29, he said: "Be on your guard here, my brethren, lest a wicked thought finds its way into your minds; lest any of you say, Elisha was disposed to observe an omen, and on this account he commanded his

servant not to return the salutation of any one on the way. It is as if he had said, 'Go so quickly as to allow no time for talking with any one on the road.'"*

For a long time there were two parties in the French church opposed to one another on the doctrines of grace and free will. The one (the so-called Semipelagians) sought for a means of reconciling the divine and the human in the work of conversion; they wished to refer to God as the source of all goodness, and to redemption as the cause of true sanctification, without denying the free self-determination of man, and thereby making God the author of sin and misery; they wished to guard againt contracted views of the paternal love of God towards all mankind. Such were the pure Christian

* Among the superstitions which Cæsarius (though in vain) sought to suppress, was an abuse which at this time was gaining ground in France—that of seeking for oracles respecting earthly things in the book which ought to be regarded as the waymark to eternal life. In earlier times it had often happened that pious men, in moments which were important for the decision of their inner life, regarded an expression of Scripture, which they happened upon, as a word from heaven specially spoken to them—of which we find examples in the lives of Athanasius and Augustin. But it was a different thing to seek in Scripture for a decision respecting uncertain worldly events, to make use of them in the service of a vain earthly mind and of superstition. We find the first trace of this abuse in Augustin; and he would have expressed himself more strongly against it, if the heathen arts of soothsaying, a consequence of mere superficial conversion, had not spread so widely in the Roman empire, and especially in North Africa. "Although," says Augustin, "it is to be wished that those who seek their fortunes out of the gospels (*qui de paginis evangelicis sortes legunt*) would rather do this than run to ask their idols;—yet this custom displeases me—the wishing to use the Word of God, which speaks in reference to another life, for worldly concerns and the vain objects of the present life." But this abuse gained ground even among the clergy; so that in doubtful earthly concerns persons would lay down a bible in a church, upon the altar, or especially on the grave of a saint, would fast and pray and invoke the saint, that he would indicate the future by a passage of Scripture, and sought for the answer in the first passage which met the eye on opening the Bible. (This was called *sortes sanctorum*.) Against this practice a decree was passed at the above-mentioned Council of Agde, A.D. 508, that since many persons, both of the clergy and laity, practised divination under the semblance of religion, or promised a disclosure of the future by looking into the Scriptures, all who advised or taught this were to be excluded from church communion. This was a repetition of the prohibition already passed at the Council of Vienne, A.D. 465.

motives of these persons; but they erred in wishing to define too sharply the lines of demarcation between the divine and the human in conversion, and ascribed too much to the will of the creature, which yet can only be considered as receptive and susceptible in relation to the eternal, creative, original source of all good. That genuine Christian design of taking the middle path between opposing errors, induced many pious men in Southern France, such as Faustus, bishop of Riez, in Provence, to join themselves to this party. They were anxious to counteract a spiritual indolence, which found its stand-point in the notion that God accomplishes everything in man without any doing on his part. Against the party stood opposed another (the so-called Predestinarians), who regarded the whole development of the divine life in man as an unconditional work of divine grace, to which the will of man can contribute nothing in any way, so that God was here regarded as a being awakening by a blind caprice some persons to faith and salvation, and driving others into sin and eternal destruction; on which they often expressed themselves with an outrageous severity that shocked all human feelings. It is evident that one extreme would necessarily call forth and promote the other. Cæsarius took the middle ground between these two parties. It was the desire of his pious soul, deeply penetrated with a sense of the nothingness of human merit and human power, with a sense of dependence on God, and the idea of an entire surrender to him,—to give prominence to the doctrine that man can do nothing of himself, that even the first movements of desire after justification and holiness come to man from God,—that he must only surrender himself to the Redeemer, in order to be sanctified by him. He was bent on putting down every assumption of merit which fostered human pride. The whole tendency of his disposition was to much fixed on one point, and he was too much captivated with Augustin (to whom he was deeply indebted for his inward Christian life and his theological development), to allow of his succeeding in clearly recognizing and expressing that point by which everything of practical importance in this matter is gained, by which alone a path can be found between the two opposing precipices, and with which faith (which is not sight) must satisfy itself; namely, that it depends

on the free self-determination of man, either to surrender himself to attracting and guiding grace, or to oppose and exclude it. But this tender-hearted man, glowing with love and filled with Christian moderation, could never fall into the harshness of that predestinarian doctrine. On the contrary, he declared himself against everything which could wound the moral feelings, or be at variance with faith in the holiness and love of God. He never expressly taught the doctrine of an unconditional predestination, but only maintained the doctrine of grace effecting everything, without indulging in wider speculations. This spirit was expressed in the system of doctrine drawn up by Cæsarius, as it was confirmed at the second council held at Orange (*Arausio*), A. D. 529. In this, among other things, it is said: "Even in its original state, human nature requires the aid of its Creator, in order to maintain its purity;" a position that could be maintained on good grounds, since the fountain of goodness for every created being can only be God, but the wishing to be something of and for himself is the cause of all evil. Then again, it is said: "Since therefore human nature cannot keep the state of soundness it has received without the help of God, how can it regain it when lost without God's help? Let no one boast of that which he seems to have, as if he had not received it; and let no one believe that he has received only in this sense, that the letter of the law has appeared to him from without" [*i. e.* let no one believe that the grace of God consists only in the revelation of the law; since the law, in and for itself, if the inward man does not agree with the law by being filled with a divine life and animated with the spirit of love, only impresses with a sense of sinfulness, but does not impart the power to do good—it cannot sanctify the soul]; for the apostle says, 'If righteousness were by the law, then Christ has died in vain.' (Gal. ii. 21.) And (Eph. iv. 8), 'He has ascended on high, and taken captivity captive, and received gifts for men.' Christ, after he had crushed the might of the Evil Spirit and freed humanity from his power, rose victoriously, rose to a participation of divine power in heaven; and he, the Redeemer, armed with divine power, glorified, and victorious over everything that opposed the kingdom of God, communicates the power of a divine life, the gifts of

the Holy Spirit, to men whom he has liberated and redeemed. Every one who has anything, has it from him. But whoever denies that he has it from him, either in reality has nothing, or that which he seems to have will be taken from him. [As soon as pride and self-will, however refined, self-confidence, and self-valuation, have gained the mastery in man, goodness is corrupted and crushed in the germ.] Heathen heroism is brought forth by worldly desires [such as the love of fame and attachment to earthly freedom]; Christian heroism is produced by the love of God, which is shed abroad in our hearts not by our own free will, but by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Even as the apostle said to those who had fallen from grace because they wished to be justified by the law: 'If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain;' so also is it justly said to those who exchange nature for grace, 'If righteousness came by nature, then Christ is dead in vain.' For the law was already in existence, and it justified not; and nature was already in existence, and it justified not. Hence Christ died not in vain in order that the law might be fulfilled by him who said, 'I am not come destroy the law, but to fulfil it;' and the nature lost by Adam is restored by him, who said that he 'came to seek and save that which was lost.'

"Man has nothing from himself but sin and falsehood. Whatever of truth and righteousness man possesses, he has from that fountain after which we must thirst in this desert, in order that, refreshed by a few drops of it, we may not faint by the way. The branches are in such a manner connected with the vine that they give nothing to it, but receive the vital sap from it. On the other hand, the vine furnishes vital sap to the branches, but receives nothing from them. Hence it is for the advantage of the disciples, and not of Christ, that Christ dwells in them and they dwell in Christ. For if the branches were cut off, other branches might shoot forth from the living root,—but the branches that are cut off, cannot live without the root." He also expressed abhorrence of those who taught that God had predestined man to evil. This was a beautiful witness of the genuine Christian spirit and of clear Christian knowledge, in the midst of uncultivated tribes of barbarians.

The faith of Cæsarius was tried by many severe afflictions

in this stormy period. One of his secretaries contrived in a most artful manner to accuse him to Alaric II., king of the Visigoths in those parts, as if from attachment to Burgundy, his native country, he was designing to bring Arles under the Burgundian government. In A. D. 505, he was torn from his flock and banished to Bordeaux. Here he acquired a great reputation. They were indebted to his prayers for the quenching of a great conflagration. Instead of plotting rebellion, as his crafty calumniator accused him, he rather laboured to suppress the ferment which arose from dissatistion with the Arian chiefs. He inculcated on all persons the Christian duty of faithful obedience to their governors, that they should give to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, and to God the things that were God's; that according to the Apostle Paul's injunction, they should obey kings and all in authority, if they commanded nothing contrary to the divine law, and see in the chiefs only chiefs and not Arians. By his conduct he gave the best refutations of the calumnies against him. Alaric himself acknowledge his innocence, and recalled him. His traducer would have been stoned, but Cæsarius obtained a pardon for him from the king. After Alaric II., in A. D. 507, had lost his life in an unsuccessful war with the Franks, this region was occupied by a host of the Ostrogoths, who had hastened to the aid of the Visigoths, and the city of Arles, then in possession of the Goths, was besieged by the united forces of the Franks and Burgundians. During the siege, it happened that a young ecclesiastic, a relation of Cæsarius, in order to be freed from the confinement, was inconsiderate enough to let himself down by a rope from the wall. This awoke suspicion among the Goths against Cæsarius, as if he wished to betray the city to their enemies. He was seized and thrown in prison, till, at last, the falsity of the charge against him came to light.

When the Goths obtained the victory, they brought a number of prisoners into the city. Cæsarius received them into his church and his house, and provided them with clothing and food, until he was able to raise a sum sufficient to purchase their freedom. In order to accomplish this object, after having exhausted the church-chest, he sold, not only all the gold and silver vessels of his church, but also stripped off all the gold and silver that could be found on the

walls and pillars of the church, and turned all into money. He considered this to be the duty of a bishop, and said of those who would not act thus, or who disapproved of such conduct: "If I see such persons among our priests, who (I know not from what love of superfluities) would not give up the dead silver and gold, which was given to Christ, for the servants of Christ—I would ask such persons whether they, if they had met with such misfortunes, would not wish to be redeemed by such dead gifts, or whether they would regard it as a sacrilege, if assistance was afforded them by means of these gifts devoted to God. I cannot persuade myself that it is contrary to the will of God to apply what has been devoted to his service, to the redemption of men, since he has given himself for their redemption."

After this season of trial, Cæsarius said, in a sermon: "The possessions on which we depend are not be found in this world, for the hope which a man sees is not hope (Rom. viii. 24); the hope of the world, which man sees, consists only in bitterness. The world presents a bitter cup to its votaries. O the misery of mankind! The world is bitter and yet is loved. How would it be loved, if it were sweet! Ye votaries of the world, to you the truth speaks,—where is that which ye loved; which was so dear to you? where is that which ye would not let slip? where are so many tracts of country, so many flourishing cities? It is enough to make a great impression on the heart, only to hear of such desolations. But now, the horrible miseries of a siege have struck our eyes;—we have seen so many dead persons, that scarcely living persons enough have been left to bury them! Contemplate that plague which by God's righteous judgment has smitten us; whole provinces have been dragged into captivity; mothers of families have been snatched away; and the mistress of many servants is now herself the bondswoman of barbarians. Barbarians, without a spark of humanity, have imposed the hard service of slaves on tender and distinguished females. But we, my beloved brethren, whom the Lord has spared, not because we deserved it, but to whom he has allowed space for repentance, we cannot think without fear and trembling, that this ought to be a warning example for all of us. Let us from the wounds of others obtain remedies for our own

wounds; and let us continually fear what the Lord says in the gospel: 'Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'"

Cæsarius was again accused to the Ostrogoth Arian king, Theodoric, and in A.D. 513 was brought by his orders to the imperial court at Ravenna. But this noble prince was so susceptible of the impression made by the venerable appearance of a man whose whole being seemed glorified throughout by the spirit of the gospel, that in a personal interview with him the charge made against him was annihilated. "I trembled," he afterwards said, "when I looked at him—when I saw the angelic countenance of the apostolic man before me; of so venerable an individual I can believe no evil." It pained him exceedingly that such a man should have been obliged by ill-designing persons to undertake so long and toilsome a journey. About noon he sent him, as a token of remembrance, a silver dish of nearly sixty pounds weight, and with it a sum of money, three hundred solidi. Cæsarius, within three days, sold the plate, and used the money received for it to set at liberty numbers of persons who had been made prisoners by the Goths.

The house in which he resided was so filled with the poor and afflicted, that it was difficult to make way through the crowd to visit him. So great was the veneration for his person, that all persons of the higher class sent him money for distribution. He was able to send a multitude of captives who had been dragged away from France, back to their families in waggons, and took with him also a large sum (eight thousand solidi) for the poor and the imprisoned in France.

Even amidst the most melancholy state of this district, and though his church was so impoverished, means were not wanting to Cæsarius for alleviating the sufferings of the people; his love and inexhaustible confidence in God overcame all difficulties, and carried him through victoriously. A great multitude of prisoners were on one occasion brought together at Arles, among whom were many of high rank, whose ransom he had paid, but who could not yet be certain of returning to their friends. As they were detained at Arles

for so long a time without the means of support, he took charge of their daily maintenance. One day his steward informed him that nothing could be done for them except to let them beg their living in the streets for that day; for if they were supplied with provisions from the church, he would have not a morsel of bread on his table the next day. When Cæsarius heard this, he went into his cell and prayed that the Lord would grant supplies for the poor. He then came back with cheerful trust, reproved the steward for his want of faith, and said to his secretary: "Go to the barn, and empty it to the last grain of corn; then bake the bread as usual, and we will all eat together; if to-morrow there should be nothing, we will all fast together; only we will not let people of good descent and the other prisoners go begging about the streets to-day while we sit down to eat and drink." But he whispered to one of his confidential friends: "To-morrow God will surely give; for he that gives to the poor, shall never suffer want." The next day, to which all looked forward with anxiety, early in the morning three vessels hove in sight, laden with corn, which the Burgundian kings Gundobad and Sigismund had sent to Cæsarius in aid of his beneficence. He often desired his attendant to go out and see whether any poor person was standing before the door, but afraid to come in, lest he should disturb his rest. He deeply lamented that the poor found it so difficult to gain access to the hearts of their brethren; and believing that he saw Christ himself asking for aid in the deaf and dumb, and in others that stood without, waiting and begging, he said: "Truly it is Christ who is waiting without, who says so much, who is deaf, and still prays, and exhorts, and adjures all to give." A poor man once asked him for money to ransom a captive, and as he had nothing to give, he said: "What must I do for thee, my poor fellow! What I have, I give to thee." He went to his cell, and fetched the sacerdotal dress intended for extraordinary occasions, gave it to him, and said: "Go, sell that to one of the clergy, and with the money set thy captive free." His heart, full of love, never refused to intercede for any sufferer, and great confidence was placed in his prayers, which were often visibly answered; but he always refused the reputation of a wonder-worker. When a mother with tears thanked him for his prayers, to which she

ascribed the preservation of her son's life, he answered her, that she ought rather to thank Him, whose power and grace are ready to assist all those in trouble who cry to him: and he often used to say: "Those to whom the care of souls is intrusted ought to be on their guard, lest persons seek from them rather what is bodily than what is spiritual; that is, the healing rather of bodily infirmities than of diseases of the soul. Divine grace grants such miraculous gifts rather to the simple than to the learned. May a gracious God grant us the discretion to keep within just bounds, and to lead a life acceptable to Him, with the talents committed to us. It is unreasonable to expect that such unworthy persons as we are will be allowed to work miracles."

Cæsarius had laboured forty years as a bishop, and had reached his seventy-third year when he was seized with severe illness. Amidst grievous pains, he asked if the day kept in memory of Augustin's death was not at hand. When he was told that the day was near, he said: "I trust in the Lord that he will not let the day of my death be far from that: ye know how I have loved him as a teacher of the truth, and how great the distance is between him and me in point of worthiness." He died on the day preceding Augustin's, the 27th of August, 542.*

* About the same time that Cæsarius laboured in France, Epiphanius, bishop of Pavia, laboured in a similar spirit in Italy. He also was a blessing to a country distracted by wars and overrun by one tribe of barbarians after another. Amidst the conflict of hostile nations he won equal confidence and veneration from the leaders of the opposing parties, and dispensed his beneficence both to friends and foes. When the savage host of Odoacer, in the year 476, ruined and plundered Pavia, Epiphanius alone could conquer the fury of the barbarians, and rescued many unfortunate persons. It was by means of his efforts that the restoration and repopulation of the city was effected. In dependence on God he undertook the restoration of the church, which had been burnt to ashes, although he saw no means of being able to meet the expense. He used to say: "To the rich soul [he meant the soul that possesses by faith true inward riches] means can hardly be wanting; and, on the other hand, it is a most difficult thing for a man who is poor in his soul to have enough." Although in his spirit he was dead to the world, and lived in the constant sight of eternity, yet, out of love to his brethren, he took a lively interest in earthly concerns. He sacrificed his rest, appeared at the courts of princes, undertook difficult, tedious journeys, in which he sacrificed all convenience and endured all deprivations, for the sake of obtaining peace, the lessening of public burdens, and the freedom of captives from the

4. *Eligius, Bishop of Noyon.*

The life of this pious bishop is of more importance to us, because a considerable part of his life was spent in an ordinary civil station and business before he entered the ecclesiastical order; and hence his life may be taken as a representation of the civil life of pious persons in his age. He was born at Chatelat, one mile from Limoges, in the year 588. He belonged to an ancient Christian family, and received a pious education,* the effects of which were spread

chiefs of the nations who at that time were masters of Italy. A journey which he undertook in his 58th year for such a purpose, attended with many difficulties in an inclement season of the year, to the court of King Theodoric, appears to have brought on his death. He returned to Pavia ill, and though the joy of being once more with his flock, after he had gained the assistance he had sought for, made him forget his ill health, yet at last he was overpowered by it. As the watchword of his life had been the words which were often on his lips, "To me to live is Christ and death is gain;" so when he felt the approach of death, he said, calmly and cheerfully, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations" (Psa. lxxxix. 1), and "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit," and "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord; my horn is exalted in the Lord; I rejoice in thy salvation" (1 Sam. ii. 1); and thus he left the world, singing the praises of God.

* The heart of a pious mother of this age is expressed in the letters of a mother of Desiderius, a friend of Eligius, who lived at the same time with him at the French court, and was afterwards bishop of Cahors. Her name was Archanefreda, and she thus writes to this her young son, Desiderius: "My dearest son, I exhort thee to think of the Lord always, to have God continually in thy soul, neither to have pleasure in evil works, which God hates, nor to do them. Be faithful to the king, and friendly to thy companions; always love and fear God. Guard carefully against all evil works, whereby the Lord is offended, that thou mayest not, by thy wicked life, lead others into wickedness. Let not thy neighbours or equals have any opportunity of calumniating thee, but rather, when they see thy good works, may they praise the Lord. Always remember, my son, what I have promised God for thee [at that time the parents were commonly the sponsors at baptism], and walk constantly in the fear of the Lord." After the death of her other two sons, she wrote to him: "What should I, thy unfortunate mother do, if thou wert to die? But thou, my dearest son, always take care that, after thou hast lost thy dear brothers, thou dost not lose thyself. Be on thy guard always against the broad way that leads to destruction, and keep thyself in the way of God. I believe that sorrow will end my life; do thou pray that *He* may receive my departing soul, after whom love causes me to sigh day and night."

over the rest of his life. When a youth, his father Eucherius placed him with a goldsmith, who was noted in his art, who superintended the public mint at Limoges. By the skill which he acquired in this art, by his general abilities, and by his intelligent Christian conduct, he soon became known through the whole neighbourhood. Religion gave him power and pleasure in labour; and by the labour which directed his attention to earthly things, he felt so much the greater need to refresh his spirit by occupying it with heavenly things. He attended public worship regularly and zealously, and what he heard read from the Holy Scriptures, was impressed deeply on his mind, and was the frequent subject of his meditations. When afterwards he obtained a Bible as his own property,* he always laid it open before him at his work.

He afterwards left his native country, and resided at the court of King Clotaire II. The royal treasurer Bobbo became intimate with him, and received him into his family. It happened that the king wished to have a chair ornamented with gold and precious stones, made in a certain manner which he described. Since none of his own workmen could make it according to his wishes, the treasurer applied to Eligius, who declared himself ready to undertake it. Much gold was given him for this work, and he used it with such care and economy, that instead of one chair, such as the king wished, he was able to finish two. Eligius caused one of the chairs to be brought to the king, but kept the other at his home. The king admired the workmanship, and expressed his satisfaction. But he was still more astonished when Eligius sent for the other chair, and said to him: "That I might not be chargeable with any negligence, I have used the gold that remained for this work." The king immediately said: "He who is found so faithful in little

* In a biography of this age a pious youth is thus described: "He read the Holy Scriptures daily with such eagerness, that he almost knew them by heart, and made them the constant subject of reflection. In this school he sought no other teacher than the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he loved with all his heart. He had him present to the eyes of his soul. He placed his hopes in his mercy, and strove to adhere to him with the entire devotion of his heart. He prayed diligently, paid attention to almsgiving and fasting, relieved the poor, clothed the naked, and, as far as lay in his power, distributed to the poor from his father's property."

things, will be faithful also in greater;" and Eligius, after this occurrence, was held in increasing respect for his talents and character, Such great confidence was now placed in him, that if any work was to be executed for the court, gold, silver, and jewels were entrusted to him without measure or weight, since there was the assurance felt that he would take no more than he needed. On one occasion, he requested the king to grant him a piece of land—the property of the crown—to found a monastery. The king consented; but Eligius afterwards found that he had stated the extent of the ground to be about a foot less than it actually measured. This vexed him exceedingly: immediately he hastened to the king, and informed him. The king said to the bystanders: "See! what a noble thing is Christian integrity! My nobles and treasurers amass great wealth for themselves, and this servant of Christ, on account of his fidelity to his Lord, could not be easy to remain silent about a handful of earth!" The king once required of him, in reference to some business, to take an oath, which according to the usages of those times was done by laying the hand on certain relics; but this was too hard a requirement for the tender religious feeling of Eligius. He endeavoured by all possible means to evade it. At last the king gave up pressing it upon him, and exempted him in a friendly manner, declaring that he would believe him more than if he had taken ever so many oaths.

Although Eligius lived at court in the midst of the world, yet his heart was always turned from the world and set on God and divine things. His going out and coming in, the beginning of his business, was accompanied by prayer,* and

* The abbot Eustasius, of the monastery of Luckau, who lived in this age, says of prayer: "The more the Lord is sought, the more will he be found. We must allow nothing to occupy us so much as diligent prayer, for the Lord exhorts us, in the person of his apostles: 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' Thus also the apostle exhorts us to pray without ceasing; thus the whole Scripture requires us to call upon God; for whoever neglects to call upon him is cut off from communion with the members of Christ." In a biography of this age mention is made of the communication of the true light which enlightens every saint who prays for himself and all believers in Christ. When the abbot Wandregisea, of Fontanelles, in this century, was still a layman, he came to a village, the inhabitants of which were in bad repute, and a quarrel

he prayed not about earthly goods for the body, but about heavenly gifts for the soul. At first he appeared outwardly like the world, for he knew that the essence of the Christian calling consisted in renouncing the world with the heart. Hence he appeared in splendid clothing, which was usually worn by courtiers, that he might occasion no surprise. But when, by his usual course of conduct, he had won sufficient respect to be able to deviate from the usual style of dress without giving offence, he laid aside all ornaments, and went in mean clothing, in order that he might give all he could spare to the poor. When a stranger enquired for his residence, it was usual to describe it by saying, "Go in that direction, and where you see a number of poor people assembled, there dwells Eligius." When he heard that vessels were arrived full of slaves for sale, captives of Roman, Gallic, British, and Moorish descent, but particularly Saxons, who were driven like so many cattle, he hastened to the spot and sometimes ransomed a hundred. When money failed him, he gave up not only all his ornaments but also necessary articles of clothing, and even stinted himself in his daily food. He went at once with them to the king, procured letters of manumission for them, and gave them the choice, whether they would return free to their native country, in which case he would furnish them with money for travelling, or remain with him not as slaves but as free brethren, or, lastly, whether they would become monks; if they decided on that, he would find suitable places for them in a monastery. Sometimes it happened that Eligius had in this manner given everything away. He sat down at table with the poor,

arose among them, which seemed likely to end in bloodshed. He had recourse to prayer, and succeeded in restoring order. His heart then began to glow and to praise God; whilst he said: "Certainly *He* must be loved above all who is present wherever he is called upon, as the Lord himself has spoken by the prophets (Jer. xxix. 13), 'And ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart.'" Similar examples of the effects of Christianity, and of men animated by it, are to be met with in modern times. Who is not reminded of the life and labours of the apostolic Schwartz, in the East Indies, what an impression he made by his preaching on the thievish Kaller; so that by means of Christianity they were in part changed into quiet, peaceable agricultural labourers.—(See *The Modern History of Missionary Institutions in the East Indies*, edited by Knapp. Halle, 1804, vol. v. p. 282, &c.)

who commonly were his guests. When his servants ridiculed or expressed their sympathy, he said, "How unbelieving are ye! Will He who fed Elijah and John in the wilderness, refuse his blessing to us in such society? I depend upon my Creator, that although we do not deserve it, yet these poor people will not leave the room till they have been refreshed by his gifts." Scarcely had he uttered these words, when persons knocked at the door, bringing bread and other provisions which the king, or some wealthy individual, or some pious man who knew his unbounded hospitality, had sent.

His tender heart was pained when he saw the bodies of malefactors hanging; he obtained permission from the king to have them taken down and interred. On one occasion he passed with his followers by the body of a person who had been hung; he went up to it, in order to have it interred; yet he first felt it on all sides, to ascertain whether there were any signs of life, and when he really perceived some, he said, not thinking of any miracle, though his admirers gave out that it was so: "What a sin we might have committed in burying a man alive, if the Lord had not helped us!" By his care he succeeded in restoring the unfortunate person. The persons who had obtained his execution urged that he should be again given up, but Eligius procured his pardon.

Eligius was zealous for the spread of religious knowledge. On his journeys he delivered edifying discourses to the people. He founded monasteries, which were distinguished by their strict discipline from the irregularities which at that time pervaded those of France; he also provided them with Bibles.

The universal veneration which his pious conduct had gained for him, and the confidence which was placed in his Christian zeal, led to his election to the episcopal office when a vacancy occurred in the year 641, which required to be filled up by a self-sacrificing, laborious man. It was the large diocese of Vermondes, Tournay, and Noyon, in and adjoining which dwelt partly people that were still heathens, whom no preacher of the gospel had yet visited, partly those who knew nothing of vital Christianity, and who had received nothing more than a mere semblance of Christianity, a mere routine of ceremonies with which various heathen superstitions were mingled. At the peril of his life, and under

many indignities which were heaped upon him, he laboured among fierce Pagans and nominal Christians, who were unwilling to renounce their heathenish pleasures and superstitions. By his Christian love and gentleness, he soon gained the victory over the rage and hatred of the Pagans. He was soon placed in antagonism to the increasing power of the mighty ones of the land, who wished to combine Pagan indulgences and superstitions with the nominal Christianity, and who promoted both among the people by their reputation and example. On one occasion, the Feast of the Apostle Peter was kept with pagan amusements in a diocese not far from the city of Noyon. Eligius, accompanied only by three of his clergy, repaired to it, amidst the crowds that were furious against him on account of his sermons. He mounted an elevated place in front of the church, and denounced in strong terms the heathenish spirit, while the crowds, consisting of people of Germanic descent, cried out in a threatening manner to him, who, owing to his Roman-Gallic origin, appeared to them as a foreigner: "Preach as much as thou pleasest, thou Roman, but thou art not permitted to abolish our ancient customs; no man shall prohibit our ancient amusements, which give us so much pleasure."*

Some fragments of the sermons of Eligius have been preserved, from which we see how anxious he was to combat the delusive notion that men might satisfy the Almighty by mere outward historical faith and outward ceremonies, and to enforce the necessity of true holiness. "It is not enough, beloved brethren," he said, "that you have assumed the Christian name, if you do not perform Christian works; for to be called a Christian avails only him who constantly preserves the doctrine of Christ in his soul, and practises it in his conduct; who commits no theft, bears no false witness, lies not, is not guilty of adultery, hates no man, but loves all as himself;

* It is narrated of Sampson, bishop of Dot, in Bretagne, in the sixth century, that after he had preached with success in an island on the first of January against the usual heathen customs at the beginning of the year, he collected around him the children who, on account of the usual festivities were running about, and when he had told them affectionately, in the name of the Lord, that they ought to abstain in future from heathenish superstitions, he presented each with a piece of money, in order, by this token of love, to secure a further entrance to his admonitions into their young hearts.

who does not recompense evil to his enemies, but rather prays for them; who stirs up no strife, but leads back to harmony those who are at variance; for the Lord himself gave this command [he quotes Matt. xix. 18; vii. 12]; and still greater (v. 44), 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you.' See here a strong command; to men it seems somewhat severe, but it has a great reward; and what? hearken!—'that you may be the children of your Father in heaven.' O, what grace! Of ourselves we are not at all worthy to be the servants of God, and by loving our enemies we become the children of God. Therefore, my brethren, love your friends in God, and your enemies for God's sake. For whoever loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law, as the apostle says. Whoever will be a true Christian must obey these commands. If he does not obey them, he deceives himself. A good Christian, then, is the man who trusts to no amulets or devices of Satan, but places all his hopes on Christ alone; who receives strangers with joy, as if they were Christ himself, since he himself says, 'I was a stranger, and ye took me in. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' He is a Christian who believes no false report, who lives chastely himself, and teaches his sons and neighbours to live chastely, and in the fear of God; who knows the Lord's Prayer and the Creed by heart, and instructs his children and all his household in them. In such a man Christ dwells; for he has said: 'I and my Father will come to him, and make our abode with him.' He admonished them to train up their children (for whom they pledged themselves at their baptism) in the fear of God,—and to visit the sick and those in prison; he warned them against the various forms of pagan superstition, not to hang amulets about the necks either of men or beasts, even if they were made by ecclesiastics, and although they were told that they were holy, containing passages of Holy Writ; for such things are not Christ's remedies, but the devil's poison.* 'Let no

* Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustin, had already spoken against this superstitious practice of making amulets of fragments or passages of the Gospels. We may see how superstition, which does not enter into man from without, but proceeds from the copious fountain of his internal depravity, always takes the same direction, if we notice how the Mahommedans in Asia and Africa sell for amulets sentences in Arabic, taken from

married woman hang amber about her neck; let no one, in weaving or colouring, call on Minerva, or one of the other heathen goddesses, but let every female wish in every work that the grace of Christ may be present with her, and let her trust with all her heart in the power of his name. Let no one cry if the moon should be eclipsed, for at God's command it is eclipsed at certain times; and let no one fear to commence any undertaking at the new moon, for God has created the moon for that purpose, that it should mark the times and lessen the darkness of the night, not to hinder any one's business, or to make any one insane, as foolish people believe. Let no one believe in fate, or in the influence of the stars, so as to say, as the nativity of a man may be, so will it be with him in after-life; for God wills that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; and he guides everything with wisdom, as he has ordained before the creation of the world. Certainly heaven is high; the earth is great, the sea is immeasurable, the stars are beautiful, but more immeasurable and more beautiful must He be who created all things; for if these visible things are so incomprehensible, the manifold fruits of the earth, the beauty of the flowers, the various species of animals, if visible things are of such a nature that we cannot comprehend them, what representation can we form to ourselves of those heavenly things which we have not seen? Or what must the Creator of all these things be, at whose nod all these things were created, and by whose will they are all governed? Fear Him, therefore, above all, my brethren; pray to Him at all times; love Him above all; trust in his mercy; never despair of his grace. Let no one anxiously observe as an omen, when he goes in or out, what meets him, what he hears any one call, or a bird sing, or what he sees any one carrying; for he who does so, acts like a heathen; but whoever despises this, let him rejoice that he can apply to himself the words of the Psalmist (Psa. xl. 4): 'Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not such as turn aside unto lies.' For this reason the apostle enjoins: Whatever ye do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.'" He laid particular stress on despising dreams; since, as the Holy Scriptures testify, they are vain, and he appealed to Lev. xix. 26: "Have Christ

the Koran. "No need," says an old proverb, full of meaning, "to paint the devil on the wall; he comes in self-invited."

always in your hearts, and his sign on your foreheads. A great thing is the sign of Christ—the cross of Christ; but it is of use only to those who obey Christ's commands. Let no one deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous; but he that committeth sin is of the devil; and no sin, be it adultery or theft, or lying, is done without the influence of the devil. Let no one deceive himself; whoever hates any man in this world, he loses everything which he presents to God in good works; for the apostle does not utter falsehood who pronounces those fearful words: 'He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and walketh in darkness.' By the term 'brother' we must understand every man, for we are all brethren in Christ. Also despise not the poor man, nor the slave, for perhaps in God's sight he is better than thou art. Strive to separate yourselves from the devil; but remain united to God, for he has redeemed you. I wish that the heathen may be astonished at your conduct; and if they ridicule your Christian life, let not that unsettle you; they must render an account to God. Wherever you may be, be mindful in your intercourse of Christ, for he says: 'Wherever two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' As an incentive to beneficence, he reminded them that all were redeemed with the same price, and served one common Lord. He represented the Redeemer as thus addressing the sinner at the last judgment: 'I made thee a man with my hand from a clod of earth; I placed thee, without thy deserving it, in the delights of Paradise, but despising me and my commands, thou preferredst to follow the tempter, and hence hast merited righteous condemnation. Afterwards I had pity upon thee; I appeared in flesh, and dwelt among sinners upon earth; I bore shame and suffering for thy sake; I took thy pains upon me, in order to heal thee. I have taken thy punishment on myself, in order to bestow glory on thee.'" "Let us love God above all," he says in another place, "for it is truly a crime not to love *Him* to whom we can repay nothing, even if we love him; for what return can we, poor sinners, make to the gracious Lord for all that he has bestowed upon us? to Him who, without our merit, has bestowed such great blessings on us unworthy creatures? to Him who, in order to save us from horrible condemnation, descended from the abode of his Father's glory, and endured the utmost ignominy on earth?"

The affectionate disposition of Eligius, and the constant

tendency of his heart to eternal life, are beautifully exhibited in his epistle to his old friend Desiderius,* bishop of Cahors; "Above all, I beg that as often as thy soul is able to rise above worldly cares to the life of eternal rest, thou wilt not omit to connect the remembrance of my insignificant person with thy prayers. It is indeed certain that nothing in this world penetrates the heart and soul with such intense solicitude, as the thought of eternal life and of the blessed fatherland of the just. With whatever the heart, the mouth overflows. Therefore, my Desiderius, whom I bear in my heart, think always of thy Eligius, when thou pourest out thy prayer before the Lord. And although we are separated in space from one another, let us always be near one another in Christ; and let us always so strive to live that, after no long period, soul and body may be connected with one another, and we may live for ever connected with one another. I hope that our most gracious Lord Jesus Christ will grant this in answer to our persevering and believing prayers."

Eligius had reached his seventieth year, in constant unwearied activity, when he peacefully found death approaching. As he was one day walking about in Noyon with the young clergy who were educated under him, he noticed something threatening to fall in a church to which they were coming; immediately he sent for a workman, in order to repair it. His pupils said it would be better to wait for a more convenient season, in order that the work might be done more firmly; he replied, "Let it be done, my children, for if it is not now repaired, I shall never live to see it done." Deeply troubled by this declaration, his pupils answered, "God forbid! may the Lord preserve you yet many years for the

* To give some notion respecting this friend of Eligius, we would quote some expressions of his to an abbess who had fallen into sin: "Moved by thy tears, I have selected this evangelical narrative (Luke vii. 38) for thee, for it will occasion thee both comfort and fear. *Comfort,* since the soul that sought relief from the burden of sin by repentance was not rejected by the Lord. *Fear,* because the soul that gives itself up to the service of the Lord must be prepared for the steady endurance of temptations, as Sirach says (ii. 1): 'My son, if thou wilt be the servant of God, prepare for temptation.' Thy tears spread joy in heaven, since thou voluntarily condemnest sins voluntarily committed. Repent to the utmost of thy power, and keep thy heart with all diligence. The more thou seest thyself forsaken by human aid, so much the more pray for divine aid. I advise thee once more to read this narrative attentively."

honour of his church and the benefit of his poor." But Eligius admonished them to acquiesce in the will of God, and said: "Be not troubled, my children; but rather rejoice, and congratulate me, for I have long earnestly desired for dismission from the tedious vexations of this life."

A slight fever was to him a sure sign of approaching death. He called all his attendants together, announced to them the speedy termination of his life, and exhorted them to love and harmony. His illness lasted five or six days, and during that time he went about with the assistance of a staff, for he was always active. On the last day of his life he again assembled all his domestics and all his young clergy, and said to them: "If you love me as I love you, you will willingly hearken to my last words. Strive to fulfil God's commands, always long after Jesus, let his teachings be deeply impressed on our hearts. If you truly love me, love the name of Christ as I love it. Think continually of the uncertainty of the present life; keep the judgment of God constantly before your eyes, for I am now going the way of all flesh: from this time you will live without me in this world, for it pleases the Lord to call me away now, and I long after my release, after rest, if it pleases the Lord." He then called the young men whom had educated and trained for the clerical office, individually, to him, and told each one to what monastery he should betake himself after his death. For a long time their lamentations and tears prevented him from speaking; and much as he longed after eternal life, and rejoiced in the approach of his end, he was yet deeply moved by his sympathy with the sorrow of his friends. At last he began again, "Do not grieve so much, nor trouble me any more by your tears. If you are wise, you will rather rejoice than mourn, for though I shall be far from you as to my bodily presence, yet in spirit I shall be present among you in a far superior manner, and if it were not so, yet God is always with you, to whom I commend you, to whose care I commit you. If I have been able to do any good, how I have laboured for your advancement in all things you will know in that day when the Lord will judge the secret thoughts of men. I know indeed that as an unprofitable servant I have done nothing as I ought to do; yet the Lord knows what has been my will hitherto." After adjuring them in the most solemn manner to abide faithful to his instructions,—to take care of his clerical establishments

in the monasteries, and had bidden them an affectionate farewell, he fell down on his knees and commended to the Eternal Shepherd the sheep that had been intrusted to his care. In his last moments he once more assembled his pupils round his bed, and while they embraced one another weeping he said again, "I cannot now say anything more to you, and you will not see me any longer with you; live then in peace, and let me go to rest." It was noticed that for a long time he prayed silently, looking up to heaven. He then prayed aloud, "O Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, as thou hast said. O remember that thou hast made me out of a clod of earth. Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight no flesh living can be justified. Remember me, O thou who art alone without sin. Christ, Saviour of the world! deliver me from the body of this death, and redeem me to thy heavenly kingdom. Thou hast always been my protector; into thy hands I commend my spirit. I know that I do not deserve to behold thy face. Yet thou knowest that my hope has always been placed in thy mercy, and that I firmly abide in thy faith, and with my last breath confess thy name. Receive me therefore, of thy great mercy, and let not my hope be brought to shame. Let thy gracious hand protect me and lead me to the place of rest, the final habitation which thou hast prepared for thy servants and for those who fear thee." Having uttered this prayer, he departed.*

* To the examples adduced in the foregoing biographies of the power which religion exerts over rude uncultivated minds, we may here add the following. The Abbot Ebrolf (Euroul) had settled with his monks in a thick forest inhabited by wild beasts and robbers. One of the robbers came to them, and, struck with awe at their appearance, said to them: "You have not chosen a suitable place for yourselves. The inhabitants of this forest live by robbery, and can endure no one among them who supports himself by the labour of his own hands. You cannot remain here any longer in safety. But what do you wish to do in this wild, unfruitful district?" The Abbot Ebrolf answered: "Know, my brother, that the Lord is with us; and since we are under his protection, we fear not the threatenings of men, for he himself has said, 'Fear not them who can kill the body, but cannot kill the soul.' And know that he will supply his servants abundantly with food even in a desert. And thou also canst be a partaker of these riches if thou wilt renounce thy evil vocation, and vow to serve the true and living God; for our God forgets all the evil which a sinner has done on the day when he turns from all his sins, as the prophet declares (Ezek. xviii. 21). Therefore, my brother,

CHAPTER IV.

GREGORY THE GREAT, BISHOP OF ROME, A.D. 590.

God, to whom all his works are known from eternity, by means of a twofold preparation fitted Gregory for the great and onerous office of guiding the church in the West, agitated at that time by so many storms. He who was to be involved in an enormous multitude of engagements of various kinds, was prepared to bear so great a burden by having filled to his fortieth year an important civil office in the state. Then, following a long-felt impulse of his heart, he retired to a monastic life, and here in calm consecrated repose he was to cultivate self-acquaintance, and to acquire power and stability for the inner life.

From this calm repose, upon which he frequently looked back with regret, he was then drawn out into a restless manifold activity, into a whirl of business for the most part altogether foreign to the ecclesiastical life and calling, as he

despair not of God's goodness on account of the greatness of thy sins, but according to the exhortation of that psalm (Psa. xxxiv.), 'Depart from evil and do good,' and be convinced that 'the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.' But let that terrible word resound also in thy ears, 'The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.' Upon this, the robber departed; but the forcible tones of the words he had heard left a deep impression on his soul. The next morning he hastened back to the monks—he brought to the abbot a present (such as his poverty could furnish) three coarse loaves and a honeycomb; he vowed amendment of his life with all his heart, and remained there as a monk. And after his example many other robbers of this forest were moved by the exhortations of the pious abbot either to become monks or to begin agriculture and support themselves in an honest way by the labour of their hands.

Another French abbot of this age, Laumann (Loumon) was suddenly attacked by robbers in his cell, but his venerable appearance so overawed them that they fell at his feet, embraced his knees, and exclaimed, "Spare us, O holy man of God!" He answered, "Why do you ask me to spare you, my children? why are you come hither?" They confessed everything to him, and he replied, full of gentleness, "The Lord have mercy on you, my beloved children stand up and renounce your robberies, that God's mercy may be granted to you."

himself laments: "As the end of the world approaches,* the times are full of disquiet, and evil increases; and thus we ourselves, whose life is apparently devoted to divine mysteries, are embroiled with earthly cares." Gregory himself drew vivid sketches of the depopulated state of the world at that time, and took occasion from it to admonish his contemporaries of the vanity of earthly things, and to direct their regards to eternity. Thus, in one of his sermons, he says: "Those saints on whose graves we stand, raised themselves in spirit to despise the then flourishing world. There was then long life among men—prosperity, rest, and peace—and yet, while the world still flourished in itself, it had already withered in the hearts of those men. Behold! now the world is withered in itself, and yet it flourishes in our hearts. Everywhere there is death, and mourning, and destruction; we are smitten on all sides, the bitter cup is handed to us from every quarter, and yet with the blindness of earthly desires we love even the bitterness of the world, we pursue the fleeting world, we hold fast to the sinking world, and since we cannot keep it from sinking, we sink ourselves with it, wishing to retain it as it sinks. Once the world enchanted by its amusements; now it is so full of suffering that of itself it points us to God. The downfall of these earthly things shows how worthless they were, even when they appeared to stand firm. Therefore think upon this, in order to direct your hearts to the love of the Eternal, so that, despising earthly glory, you may attain through our Lord Jesus Christ to that glory which you already possess in faith." And in another sermon he says: "I pray you, what now can give joy in this world? Everywhere we behold sorrow; on every side we hear groans. Cities are destroyed, fortresses are pulled down, the fields are laid waste, the land is become desolate. The villages are empty, and scarcely an inhabitant is left in the cities, and even this small remnant of the human race is daily and incessantly massacred. The scourge of divine justice does not rest, because no amendment has followed under it. We see how some are dragged to prison, some are mutilated, others are put to death. What

* The devastations which God, who kills in order to make alive and who knows how to call new life out of death, permitted to be the harbingers of a new creation, appeared to those who suffered from them as omens of the end of all things.

is there, my brethren, that can give joy in this life? If we still love such a world, we love not pleasures but pains. What has become of that city which was once the empress of the world?" He then points out how other great cities had met with a similar fate, and closes with the exhortation: "Therefore let us despise with all our hearts the present world, at least, as one that has perished; may our longing after the world find an end with the end of the world, and let us imitate the works of the pious as we are able." He availed himself of the state of the world to remind bishops of their responsibilities. "You see," he said, "by what sword the world is smitten to the ground; you see under what strokes the world daily sinks. Does not this come to pass through the guilt of our sins? Behold! cities are ruined; fortresses are destroyed; churches and monasteries are pulled down; the land is laid waste. But we are the cause of the death of the people who perish, we who ought to be their guides to life."

Italy was laid waste by the Longobards, who frequently threatened the Roman territory, and Gregory, as one of the most powerful vassals of the Greek emperor, had to take measures for the defence of the country, placed between the Longobards thirsting for conquest, the governors of the Greek empire, often forgetful of their duties, and a court full of intrigues. We may imagine what a melancholy situation it must have been for a man who would so gladly have devoted himself entirely to his spiritual duties! Moreover, he had to attend to the management of the numerous estates which the Romish church possessed in various parts of the world and in different kingdoms, and the revenues of which were indispensable to the bishop that, as the duties of his office required, he might provide for the maintenance of a multitude of poor persons, and the redemption of a number of captives. How much Gregory regarded this as the duty of a bishop, is evident from one example. Some poor aged persons came to him at Ravenna, who told him how much had been given them everywhere for their journey; and when he asked them what they had received from Marinian, the new bishop of Ravenna, who in his youth had been a monk with him, they answered, he had refused to give them anything, alleging that he had nothing to give. Gregory wrote, therefore, to a friend, whom he commissioned to remonstrate with Bishop

Marinian on the subject. "It seems strange to me that a person who has clothes, and silver, and a cellar, should have nothing to give to the poor. Tell him, therefore, that with his condition he must also alter his manner of living. Let him not think that reading and prayer will now be enough for him; that he can be allowed to sit alone in a corner without bringing forth fruit in works. He must help the necessitous, he must regard the wants of others as his own; otherwise his title of bishop will be only an empty name."

He gives us a picture of his own situation in a few words of one of his letters: "I must at the same time attend to the bishops and the clergy, the monasteries and the churches; I must be on my guard against the machinations of enemies, always suspicious of the fraud and meanness of the governors; the purer your love is towards me, the more correctly estimate my labours and sufferings." He complains also, in a sermon: "When I lived in a cloister, my soul could almost always keep in a disposition for prayer. But since I have taken on myself the burden of the pastoral office, my soul, distracted with many things, can hardly ever collect itself, since sometimes I am obliged to receive reports of the affairs of the churches; sometimes of the monasteries, and often respecting the life and conduct of individuals; sometimes the affairs of citizens are referred to me; sometimes I have to sigh over the desolating swords of the barbarians, and to dread the wolves plotting against the flocks entrusted to my care; sometimes I have to attend to the management of estates, in order that those who have a legal maintenance (the clergy, monks, and nuns), may not want a livelihood; sometimes I must be patient towards the robbers of church property; sometimes, without violating love, I must withstand them. How can the soul, distracted by so many and such various thoughts, retire within itself, in order to collect itself for preaching, and not to neglect the service of the Word?" And in another sermon he says: "How am I able to think so that what is necessary for the support of the brethren may be provided, to take care for the defence of the city against hostile swords; to prevent the citizens from being surprised by a sudden assault, and amidst all this to dispense in the fullest and most efficacious manner the word of exhortation for the good of souls? For to speak of God

requires a tranquil and undistracted soul." Yet he knew in whom he trusted, when he says: "What sort of watchman am I who stand not on the height of a mountain, but in the valley of weakness?" He thus answers the question himself: "But the Creator and Redeemer of the human race is powerful to impart to me, unworthy as I am, vigour of life and power of the tongue, if from love to him I do not spare myself in the publication of his word." He knew also how to take advantage of these conflicts for his inner life; by his own experience he saw clearly how easily a man living undisturbed in the quiet of contemplation might deceive himself respecting the state of his own soul, and that the divine and the human can only be rightly discriminated under temptations and conflicts. He says: "By contemplation is man directed to God, but by the force of temptation he is driven back to himself. Temptation molests, that contemplation may not puff up; and contemplation elevates, lest temptation should sink. For if contemplation raised the soul so that temptation was utterly wanting, it would fall into pride; and if it were so oppressed by temptation, that it would not rise in contemplation, it would sink into despair. But by a wonderful arrangement the soul is balanced in a mean, so that it neither becomes proud of its good things nor sinks under its evils." And he beautifully remarks on Matt. xx. 22: "The disciples desired a place of height; the truth calls them back to the way by which alone they could attain that height. Man attains to glory by the cup of suffering. . . . What was that 'all' which he had heard of the Father and would reveal to his servants in order to make them his friends (John xv. 15)? What, but the joys of inward love, those feasts of the heavenly fatherland which by the aspirations of his love he impresses daily on our minds? For if we love the things above the heavens of which we have heard, we already know what we love, for love itself is knowledge. The friends of the Lord make known their eternal fatherland by word and life; through sufferings they enter into it. But whoever has attained this dignity of a friend of God, let him look at himself, how he is in himself, and let him look at the gifts he has received as to something exalted above himself."

His spiritual functions were to him the dearest and most important; his exhortations to the bishops show how deeply

he was penetrated by a sense of the greatness and responsibility of the office of a spiritual pastor. "There are only a few labourers," he laments, "for the great harvest, which we cannot say without sorrow; for although there is no lack of persons to hear what is good, there is a lack of persons to declare it. Behold! the world is full of priests, but yet there are only a few labourers for the harvest of God, since though we have undertaken the priestly calling, we do not fulfil the duties of this calling. Whoever is unable to exhort all at the same time by a connected discourse, must instruct individuals as many as he can, edify them by private conversations, and by simple exhortations bring forth fruits in the hearts of his children. We must always consider what was said to the apostles, and through them is said to us, 'Ye are the salt of the earth.'" He expresses his grief that men should postpone, to the outward matters of business connected with the episcopal office, the office of preaching, which yet was the most important of all. "In order that what I say," he remarked, "may offend no one, I equally accuse myself, although I have submitted to act thus from being compelled by the necessities of this time of desolation. For we are degraded to outward concerns. We neglect the office of preaching, and still, to our own condemnation, assume the title of bishops. Let us consider who has been converted by our tongue, what profit have we brought to God, we who having received our talents were sent out to trade with them; for he said, 'Occupy till I come.'—Behold! he is already come; behold! he requires profit from our traffic—What gain of souls can we show him from it?"

To a bishop of Messina who wished to wait upon him at Rome, he wrote repudiating such vain demonstrations of respect: "Do not trouble yourself to come to me, but pray for us, that although we are separated from one another by the sea, we can yet be connected with one another in spirit, through love, by the help of Christ; so that supporting one another by reciprocal exhortations, we may be able to place the pastoral office entrusted to us without spot, in the hands of our coming Judge."

To a bishop whom he had censured for his secular life, Gregory wrote: "You must be aware that you have undertaken not the care of earthly things, but the guidance of

souls; to that you must direct your heart, to that you must apply your utmost care and diligence." To another he wrote, "Let the word be in our mouth, and glowing zeal in our hearts, so that we may, in truth, belong to the number of those of whom we read in Acts ii. 3; for truly, fiery tongues will settle upon us if we are inflamed by the glow of the Divine Spirit to publish the word of exhortation to our brethren and sons." He got up from a sick-bed, and preached with a weak voice: "The voice," he said, "is unequal to the exertion of speaking, and I admit it when I cannot be heard by many, I am ashamed to speak among many. But I blame myself for this feeling. For how? should I, because I cannot profit many, on that account not be anxious for a few?" He preached while the Longobard host was spreading devastation almost to the walls of Rome, and at last closed his sermons on Ezekiel, in which he did not proceed beyond the fortieth chapter, with these words: "Let no one censure me, if I leave off after this discourse; for you all see that our sufferings have reached the highest point; everywhere we are surrounded by swords—on all sides death threatens us. Some return to us with their hands chopped off; of others we hear that they are either taken prisoners or killed; what then remains for us but that we thank God with tears, under his rod, which is the punishment of our sins? For our Creator has become our Father by the spirit of adoption which he has given us. Sometimes he feeds his children with bread; sometimes he chastises them with the rod: by pains and gifts he trains them for their eternal inheritance."

It was Gregory's earnest endeavour to promote the study of the Scriptures among both clergy and laity. He says, in one of his sermons: "As we behold the faces of strangers, but do not know their hearts, yet when we are connected with them by confidential intercourse, we learn by this means to know their thoughts; so when in the Divine Word nothing is seen but the mere history, it is nothing more than the outward countenance. But when by constant intercourse we imbue our minds with it, then we enter into its spirit as in the confidence of reciprocal conversation." "Often we believe," he says elsewhere, "when we do something, that it is meritorious; but when we return to the Word of God,

we see at how great a distance we stand from perfection." A bishop, whom Gregory had exhorted to the study of the Scriptures, excused himself on the ground that the disturbed state of the times would not give him leisure for reading; Gregory pointed out the futility of this plea, and referred him to Rom. xv. 4 ("Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope"). "If then," he said, "the Holy Scriptures are written for our comfort, we ought to read them more in proportion as we feel oppressed by the burden of our sufferings." The bishop, on the other hand, quoted Matt. x. 19 ("But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak"); from which misunderstood words, he thought it might be inferred that the teachers of the church, without applying to the study of the Divine Word, need only trust to the immediate suggestion of the Holy Spirit. But Gregory well knew how to refute such a ground of excuse. "The Divine Word would be left to us for no purpose, if, being filled with the Spirit, we had no need of the external word. But it is one thing what we may trust to without doubt in a time of persecution, and another thing what we ought to do when the church is in a state of rest; for we receive through this Spirit, in reading, what, if occasion should arise, we must show by suffering." He also reproved one of the emperor's physicians, that amidst the distractions of the times he neglected reading daily the words of his Redeemer. "What else are the Holy Scriptures," he wrote to him, "but a letter from the Almighty God to his creatures? Truly, if you were staying at a distance from the court, and received a letter from the earthly emperor, you would not rest, you could not sleep, till you knew its contents. The King of heaven, the Lord of men and angels, has sent you his letter, giving you directions how to gain eternal life, and yet you neglect to read this letter carefully. Therefore bestir yourself, and reflect daily on the words of your Creator. Learn to know the heart of God from the words of God, in order that you may yearn with ardent longing after the Eternal—that your soul may glow with more intense desire after heavenly joys; for there will

be so much greater rest in your soul, if love to your Creator gives you no rest. But in order that you may attain to that, may God Almighty pour his Spirit into you; may he fill your soul with his own presence, and thus filling it, raise you to himself."

We have indeed seen that Gregory applied the words of our Lord, "Ye are the salt of the earth," in too confined a sense; since he referred these words, which relate to all Christians as such, only to the teachers of the church, as the successors of the apostles. But he was very far from considering the call to labour for the spread and advancement of the kingdom of God, as not common to all Christians. After describing the dignity of the priests in the words of Malachi (ii. 7), "For the priests' lips should teach knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is a messenger or angel of the Lord of hosts;" he added, addressing all the members of the church: "But you may all attain the high dignity of this name, if you will; for if any one among you, as far as he has received grace from above, calls his neighbour from wickedness and seeks to exhort him to a right course, if he speaks to him words of holy exhortation, he is certainly a messenger or angel of the Lord. And let no one say, I am not capable of exhorting others; give as much as thou art able; that a severe reckoning may not be required of thee for keeping in a dishonest way what thou hast received; for he had received only one talent who would rather hide it than put it out to use. As far as ye yourselves have made progress, take others with you; seek to gain companions in the ways of God. If one of you, my brethren, is going to the market or the bath, he invites some one whom he sees at leisure to come with him. Let what you thus do in earthly things serve as an example for you; and when God is the object at which you aim, strive not to come to Him alone, for on this account it is written, 'Let him that heareth, say, Come!' (Rev. xxii. 17); in order that who ever has heard in his heart the voice of heavenly love may speak the word of exhortation outwardly to his neighbour. And perhaps he has no bread to give alms to the needy; but if he has a tongue, there is something of more value in his power to give. For it is a greater thing to refresh, by the nourishment of the Word, a soul destined to

everlasting life, than to satisfy the mortal body with earthly bread. Therefore, my brother, do not withhold from thy neighbour the alms of the Word." And in another sermon he says: "There is no one who can truly say, 'I have received no talent, I therefore need give no account;' for to every poor man, even the little that he has received will be reckoned as a talent. One has received knowledge; he is bound to display his talent in the office of preaching. Another has received earthly possessions; then earthly possessions are his talent, for the use of which he has to render an account. Another has obtained neither a knowledge of heavenly things nor an abundance of earthly things; but he has learnt a trade by which he supports himself, and so his trade will be placed to his account as a talent. Another has received none of all these things, but perhaps he stands in a confidential relation to a rich man. If, therefore, he does not employ his interest with such a man on behalf of the needy, he will be condemned for the non-employment of his talent."

While he exhorted to the study of Holy Writ, he strongly insisted on the distinction between the true and false use of Scripture, and exhorted to such a method of reading the Bible, in which its relation to individual sanctification would always occupy the first place. "Those persons," he said, "who wish to explore the mysteries of God in Holy Scripture more than they are able to comprehend, will gain nothing by their hunger; for they do not seek that by which they may be trained to humility, patience, and long-suffering, but only what may serve to distinguish them as men of learning, and enable them to talk on all points. They often talk boldly of the nature of God, while they are wretchedly ignorant of their own. While they strive after what they cannot attain, they neglect to learn that which might conduce to their own improvement." But he pointed out at the same time, how every one, if he sought in the right way, might find an answer to his inquiries and satisfaction for his necessities in the Holy Scriptures: "God," he said, "does not answer individual dispositions by special sounds, but he has so constituted his Word that he answers by it all questions. If we seek our special concerns in the Holy Scriptures, we shall find them. There is a general answer

given in them to all of us, respecting that which we suffer in particular. The lives of those who lived before, are a pattern for those that follow them. For, to quote one example out of several—see! if we are smitten by some affliction or grievance in the flesh, we long perhaps to ascertain its hidden causes in order to find comfort in what we suffer, in the knowledge of the thing itself. But since no special answer is given us respecting our particular trials, we take refuge in the Holy Scriptures. There we find what Paul heard when he was tried by an infirmity in the flesh: 'My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.' This was said to him in reference to his special infirmity, in order that it need not be said to us all particularly. We therefore hear the voice in Holy Writ in reference to Paul's sufferings, that when we have to endure suffering, we need not seek to hear it each of us individually for his consolation. The Lord answers us all together, and when he has once spoken, he need not repeat it. In what he spoke to our fathers by the Holy Scriptures, he has had our improvement in view. Therefore the teachers of the church, when they see many persons suffering from despondency, because God does not answer us all in so many words, may confidently say that God has only spoken once and will not repeat it, that is, he does not now render assistance to the thoughts and trials of individuals by particular prophetic voices, or the ministry of angels; for Holy Writ includes in itself everything which can suit individual cases, and it is constructed in such a manner as to form the lives of later persons by the examples of those who lived at an earlier period."

Gregory combated, not less earnestly than the great fathers of the church of whom we have spoken in the former part of this work, the false notion that a man by professing the pure doctrine contained in the creeds, and by zeal for this profession, can satisfy the claims of religion without the practical influence of his faith on his life. To a bishop who boasted to Gregory his zeal in the conversion of heretics, but of whom he had cause to think that he had not laid sufficient stress on holiness in himself and others, he wrote: "I thank Almighty God that by your instrumentality, heretics have been reclaimed to the church. But you must take care that those who are

already in the bosom of the church so live that by their evil conduct they do not rank among its enemies. For if they do not love what is divine, but serve earthly lusts, then you will bring up strange children in the bosom of the church herself." When Riccared, king of the Visigoths in Spain, had given up Arianism for the orthodox doctrine, Gregory admonished the first Spanish bishop, Leander of Seville, when he expressed his joy at the king's conversion, to watch over it, that he might perfect the good work that was begun, and not be elated as if he had already done good enough—that he should show his fidelity to the faith he had professed by the conduct of his life, and prove himself to be a citizen of the heavenly kingdom by his works. And to the king himself he thus wrote on the occasion: "You ought to exercise great moderation in the administration of your government, in order that the plenitude of your power may not seduce your soul; for only then will the government be well administered when the lust of power does not prevail over honour. You must use precaution that anger may not find its way into your breast, and that what you are allowed to do is not done with over-haste. Anger, also, if it punishes the guilt of transgression, must not carry away the soul with it as if it were its lord, but must obey as the servant of reason; for if it has once begun to take possession of the soul, it will consider as right what it does in a cruel manner. Hence it is written, 'The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.' (James i. 20.)"

Although Gregory was credulous respecting the accounts of miracles in his age, yet he was far from that morbid craving for the miraculous which was so taken with particular miracles as to forget the aim and central point of all miracles. Many a noble sentiment he uttered respecting the true object of all miraculous appearances, in order to raise the regards of men from the visible to the invisible, respecting the relation of particular miracles to the highest miracles, the end of all miracles, the work of God in the hearts of men, redeemed and sanctified by him, the work of bringing forth a new creature. Thus in one place, he says: "When Paul came to Malta, and saw the island full of unbelievers, he healed the father of Publius, who was ill of dysentery and a fever, by his prayers; and yet he said to Timothy when ill,

'Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and for thy often infirmities.' How is it, O Paul, that thou restorest the sick unbeliever to health, and yet prescribest to thy fellow-labourer in the publication of the gospel only natural remedies, like a physician? Is not this the reason—because outward miracles have for their object that souls should be conducted to the inward miracle, so that by that which appears outwardly as a visible miracle, faith may be produced in the greater, invisible miracle? By such a miracle was the father of Publius healed, that he was made alive again in the spirit, while by the miracle he received bodily soundness. For Timothy no outward miracle was needed, since already he was wholly alive inwardly." And in a sermon, he says: "In order for faith to grow, it must be nourished by miracle: for when we plant shrubs we pour water on them till we see that they have taken firm root in the ground, and when this comes to pass, we leave off watering them. Some of these miraculous signs must be more closely considered; for the church works now, in a spiritual manner, what it then effected through the apostles in a bodily manner. Believers, who have renounced the language of their former worldly life, who cause holy truths to issue from their lips, announcing, as far as they are able, the praise and power of their Creator, what else do they do but 'speak with new tongues?' When they hear pernicious counsel, but are not carried away to commit evil works, they 'drink,' indeed, 'deadly poison,' but it does not hurt them. When they see their neighbours weak in goodness, and help them with all their might, and strengthen them by their own example, what else do they do but 'lay their hand upon the sick so that they recover?' These miracles are so much greater in proportion as they are more spiritual; so much greater since, by their means, not the body but the soul is revived. These miracles, my beloved brethren, you may perform if you will, by the grace of God. Strive after these miracles of love and piety, which are more sure as they are more hidden." And in another passage, he says: "We must distinguish between those gifts of the Spirit without which a man cannot attain to life, and those by which holiness of life is manifested for the advantage of others; for gentleness, humility, patience, faith and hope, are gifts of the Spirit, but gifts of a kind without which men

cannot attain to everlasting life. The gifts of prophesying and of miraculous cures are also his gifts, but such as demonstrate the prescience of his power for the benefit of the beholders."

Gregory rejoiced in the successful agency of the Abbot Augustin, whom he had sent out for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, and who he believed was supported by miracles in his work. Gregory praised the divine grace, but warned Augustin that he should not be lifted up by it. This active missionary needed such an admonition. By his want of humility there was danger of the divine work being hindered, of which he was the instrument. Probably, if he had possessed more of this salt of all Christian virtue and activity, he might have succeeded in accomplishing something very important for the establishment and progress of the new church in England, and induced the ancient Britons, who by their ancient customs and ecclesiastical freedom, were separated from the Roman Anglo-Saxon church, to unite themselves to it, so as to form a whole with it. The Britons asked the opinion of a pious anchorite, respecting the proposal made to them. His answer was, that they might follow Augustin if he were a man of God. When they further asked what was the sign by which to distinguish a man of God, he replied, "If he is meek and lowly of heart, according to the pattern of his Lord, it may be expected that he, as a disciple of Christ, wears his Master's yoke, and will not wish to impose any other on you. But if he is of a violent and haughty temper it is evident that he is not born of God, and we ought not to listen to his words." When they asked again, by what sign they might know that he was a meek and humble man, he said, "that they should first of all let him enter and take a place with his friends in the assembly, in which they wished to consult on that business. If they came in later, and he rose up to them at their entrance, they ought to acknowledge him as a servant of Christ; but otherwise if he remained sitting, although they far exceeded his friends in number." Such an outward sign is, indeed, rather deceptive, but yet it may have a special importance as an involuntary expression of the disposition. The internal impress of the spirit is often shown most distinctly in minute traits, and so it might be here. And the ancient Britons

accordingly would form a right judgment if they noticed a want of humility in Augustin, and that he, in fact, required the exhortation and warning which Gregory addressed to him.

He wrote to him the following letter, inspired by the spirit of Christian wisdom:—"Glory be to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good-will amongst men, that the grain of corn has fallen in the earth and died (John xii. 24), in order that *he* should not reign *alone* in heaven by whose death we live, by whose weakness we are made strong, by whose sufferings we are redeemed from suffering, out of love to whom we seek our brethren in Britain whom we knew not, by whose grace we have found those whom we sought without their knowing it. Is it not the word of him who said, 'My Father worketh hitherto and I work;' and who, in order to show that he will convert the world, not by human wisdom but by his own power, chose unlearned men for his apostles: the same thing which he does now, since he has condescended to effect mighty things among the English people by weak instruments? But, my beloved brother, there is something in this heavenly gift which, along with your great joy, gives reason for much fear. You must rejoice that the souls of Englishmen have been led by outward miracles to inward grace, but you ought to fear lest the miraculous works which have been performed should puff up your own weak soul; for we must remind one another that when the disciples returned with joy from their mission, and said to their heavenly Master, 'Lord, even the very devils are subject unto us through thy name;' they were at once told, 'In this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.' When they rejoiced in the miracles, they allowed a self-seeking and temporal joy to take possession of their souls. But their Lord recalled them from a selfish joy to one that was common to all his true disciples, from temporal to eternal joy. For not all the elect work miracles, but the names of all of them are written in heaven. The disciples of the truth ought to rejoice only in the good which they all have in common, and in which there is no end of joy. Therefore, my beloved brother, this remains for you to do; that amidst the effects which you produce outwardly by the power of God, you always examine yourself with strict-

ness, and learn correctly what you are yourself, and how great the grace of God has shown itself to be among this people, for whose conversion you have also received the power of working miracles. If you recollect that you have sinned against our Creator in any way, by word of mouth or by deeds, recall this continually to your mind, in order that the remembrance of your guilt may keep down rising pride. And as to all the wonderful powers you have received, regard them as given, not to yourself, but to those for whose salvation they were entrusted to you. With these miraculous powers the soul must be kept humble, lest it seek its own honour by means of them, and be carried away by the joy it feels for its own exaltation. By these miracles, nothing must be sought for except the winning of souls, and the honour of Him through whose power these miracles are performed. But the Lord has given us one mark in which we may heartily rejoice, and by which we may recognize the honour of our election. 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one towards another.'" A most precious admonition for every one in any age to whom the Lord has granted great success in his ministry, and who is tempted to glorify himself on account of what God has effected by his instrumentality.

A female who suffered great anguish from a sense of her sins, sought consolation from Gregory, and wrote to him that she would give him no rest till he had informed her that he had received a special revelation that her sins were forgiven. Gregory wrote to her that he was unworthy of a special revelation, and referred her to the fountain of the Redeemer's mercy that was open for all, but said, "I know that you fervently love the Almighty, and I trust in his mercy that that word from the lips of the truth has been spoken also in reference to you, 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.'" In one of his sermons he said, of Christian self-knowledge: "The greater progress saints make in the divine life, so much more sensible are they of their own unworthiness; for when they are nearest the light, they discover what was concealed in their inner man, and they seem outwardly more hateful the more beautiful that is which they behold internally. For every one when he is enlightened by contact with the true light, becomes manifest

to himself, since by knowing what holiness is, he is also enlightened to know what guilt is."

But he warned his hearers against that sham humility which fosters vanity by means of what is most opposed to all vanity and all pride. "We know many," he says, "who without being accused by any one, confess that they are sinners; but if they are censured by others on account of a fault, seek to justify themselves, that they may not appear as sinners. If such persons, when they voluntarily say it, acknowledged with real humility that they are sinners, they would not, when censured by others, deny that they are what they have voluntarily confessed themselves to be."

Speaking of the nature of self-denial, he says: "Is it not enough that we renounce our property, although we do not renounce ourselves? Why must we come out of ourselves? We must renounce ourselves in that which we have made ourselves through sin, and keep ourselves in that which we have become through grace." In reference to the same subject he says elsewhere: "The more holiness daily grows in us through God's Spirit, the more our own spirit lessens. For we attain the perfection of growth in God when we renounce ourselves entirely."

Gregory always spoke against the externalizing and isolating of virtues and good works, and pointed out, that a close connection exists between every kind of real goodness, and that love is the soul of all goodness, apart from which it has no value. "Chastity," he says, "abstinence, distribution of earthly goods among the poor, are nothing without love. Satan very much dreads the true humble love which we show towards one another; he grudges us our union, for we thus maintain that which he could not himself hold fast. Evil spirits fear the flock of the elect if they are bound to one another by the harmony of love. But the value of harmony appears from this, that without it the other virtues are no virtues." "In order," he says, "that a person should show compassion to the needy in a right manner, two things are requisite; the man who gives, and the thing which is given. But the man is of incomparably greater value than the thing. Whoever, therefore, communicates of his earthly substance to his destitute neighbour, but does not guard his own life from evil, gives God his property but gives himself to sin.

He presents what is of least value to his Creator, and that which is of greater value he retains for the Evil One. Only that is a genuine sacrifice to God, when the branches of devotion proceed from the root of righteousness." He marks love as the equalizing principle for all the distinction of gifts among men as bodily and spiritual, since, by means of it, a gift peculiar to the individual becomes common property. In speaking of those diversified gifts among the apostles which were designed to supplement one another, he says: "The Almighty has acted with the souls of men as he has with the different countries of the earth. He might have given fruits of all kinds to every land; but if every land did not require the fruits of another, there would be no fellowship maintained with the others. Hence it comes to pass, that to one he gives a superfluity of wine, to another of oil, to another of cattle, to another of the fruits of the field, so that, since one gives what the other has not, and the latter supplies what the former wants, the separated lands are united by a communication of gifts. And like different countries, the souls of saints are related to one another; by reciprocally communicating what has been imparted to them, as different countries share with one another their respective productions, they are all united together in one love." Thus Gregory points out how the inequality and diversity among men is necessary and ordained by God; that to wish to make all things externally equal would be a mutilation of nature, and a destruction of divine arrangement; but that the love that proceeds from the gospel equalizes all from within, as all the inequalities founded in nature, or springing out of the relations of life, ought to be materials for the expression and preservation of love. Of true prayer, he remarks: "We see, my dear brethren, in what numbers you are assembled at this feast; how you bow your knees, strike upon your breasts, utter words of prayer and confession, and moisten your faces with tears. But, I beseech you, consider the quality of your prayers: see to it whether you pray in the name of Jesus, that is, whether you desire the joys of everlasting blessedness; for you do not seek Jesus in the house of Jesus, when in the temple of eternity you pray for temporal things without reserve. One prays for a wife, another for an estate, another for a livelihood. It is allowable, indeed, to pray for such objects to the Almighty if we need

them, but we must, at the same time, remember what our Saviour has enjoined, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you.'" And in another place he says: "True prayer consists not in the words of the lips, but in the feelings of the heart, for not our words, but our desires, fall upon the secret ear of God as the most powerful sound. If we pray for eternal life with our lips, but do not desire it with our hearts, our calling is only a silence. But if we desire with the fulness of our hearts, then our very silence is a calling upon God. The hidden cry is therefore in the inward parts, in the longing of the heart which does not reach the human ear, and yet fills the ear of the Creator." Of the influence of the Holy Spirit on the human mind he says: "The breath of the Holy Spirit elevates the human soul when it touches it, and suppresses earthly thoughts, and inflames the soul with longings after the eternal; so that it rejoices in nothing so much as in things above, and despises what comes from the earth and from human corruption. To understand the hidden word is to receive the word of the Holy Spirit into the heart. This word only he can know who has it. It is felt, but cannot express itself in words." Of the various ways in which the Holy Spirit draws men to himself, and how he trains them, Gregory says: "God sometimes awakens us by love, sometimes by fears, to repentance. Sometimes he shows us the nothingness of the present, and directs our desires to the love of the eternal; sometimes he begins with revealing the eternal, that then the temporal may be exposed in all its nothingness. Sometimes he places our own wickedness full in view, and thus softens our hearts to feel pain for the wickedness of others. Sometimes he presents the wickedness of others to our view, and by thus leading us to repentance, delivers us, in a wonderful way, from our own wickedness.

A man who understood so well the manner in which Christianity was designed to operate on the human heart, must have acknowledged that man, in order to lead his brethren to salvation, can do no more than by word and conduct bring this inward divine power near their hearts; that the work which the Lord reserves to himself alone to accomplish, cannot be coerced by human mechanism or human power. And we find in his writings many beautiful expressions relating to

this subject, although, carried forward by a zeal not sufficiently regulated, he did not always act in accordance with the principles here laid down. He declared himself strongly against those blind zealots who compelled the Jews in Italy to receive baptism, or wished to obstruct them in the free exercise of their religion. To a bishop of Naples he writes: "Those persons who with upright intentions attempt to lead unbelievers to the true faith, must endeavour to act with kindness not with rudeness, that the souls which might be won by a full development of Christian truth, may not be driven farther off by hostile feelings. Those who act otherwise, and under this pretext would hinder them from the exercise of their own religion, show that they seek rather to advance their own interests than the cause of God. Why should we prescribe rules for the Jews how they are to conduct their worship, if we cannot gain them thereby? We must therefore strive to attract them more by rational conviction and gentleness, to join us, and not to flee from us, that when we prove what we say, from their own sacred writings, we may, by God's grace, convert them." And to a bishop of Tarragona, he writes: "We must seek to lead those who are far from Christianity by gentleness and mildness, by exhortation and conversation, to the faith; in order that those who cannot be drawn to the faith by the gentle power of preaching, may not be repelled by threatenings and terror."

CHAPTER V.

CHRISTIANITY IN POVERTY AND SICKNESS.

The influence of Christianity is shown not less in little things than in great. It requires no great and conspicuous theatre, in order to manifest itself. It is the light which, wherever it may be, cannot be hid under a bushel. What Christianity really is, appears most evidently in its filling vessels that are insignificant and contemptible in human eyes, with a heavenly glory which infinitely outshines all earthly glory,

since it pours into them the powers of the world to come, compared with which all the powers of earth are nothing. In all ages the glorious declaration of the apostle in 1 Cor. i. 27, has been amply verified in the operations of the gospel: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." A great part of these effects of the gospel always remains hidden from the eyes of the majority of men, and hence finds no place in the pages of history. So much the more foolish it is to wish to judge of the effects of Christianity in any age from what appears on the surface: and so much more is it the duty of an historical observer, to search in every direction for these rays of light scattered through the darkness, and next to the man whom the Lord had placed in so exalted a position, and intrusted with so great and varied a field of labour, to notice a man who, in the lowest worldly station, in the most needy and helpless lot, manifested the glory of a divine life. We should have known nothing of the life of this child of God, if that great bishop had suffered himself to be deceived like the world, by appearances, so as to be enabled to discern this treasure in an earthen vessel. Let us listen to him while he describes the life of this individual: "In the vault through which persons pass to the church of Clement, was a certain man named Servulus, whom many of you knew, as I knew him, poor in earthly goods, rich towards God, who had been worn out by long illness; for from childhood to the end of life he was lame in all his limbs. Do I say that he could not stand? He could not even sit upright in his bed, nor raise his hand to his mouth, nor turn himself from one side to the other. His mother and brother were always with him to wait upon him, and whatever he received in alms he distributed with his own hands to the poor. He could not read, but he had purchased a Bible; he received all pious men as his guests who read to him constantly out of the Bible. And thus, without being able to read, he became acquainted with the whole Bible. Amidst all his pains he endeavoured to thank God, and to spend day and night in praising him. When he felt himself near death he begged his visitors to

stand up near him and to sing psalms with him in expectation of his approaching dissolution. And as he was singing with them he made a sudden pause, and exclaimed aloud: 'Hush! do you not hear how the praise of God sounds in heaven?' And as he applied the ear of his heart to this praise of God which he perceived mentally, the holy soul departed from the body." To this narrative Gregory added a word of exhortation to his flock: "Behold the end of this man who bore with resignation the sufferings of this life. But I beseech you, my beloved brethren, consider what ground of excuse shall we find in the day of strict account, we, who although we have had worldly good, and the use of our limbs, are yet slow in good works, while this poor man who wanted the use of his hand could yet fulfil the Lord's commands. Even if it should not please the Lord to exhibit against us the apostles, who, by their preaching, brought crowds of believers into his kingdom, nor the martyrs, who shed their blood when they entered their heavenly fatherland; yet what shall we say when we see this Servulus, whose limbs were lamed by disease, without his being prevented from the accomplishment of good works?" Let us compare with this Servulus, whose life was not in vain, even in a disabled, helpless body, and who effected more for the glory of God and the true interests of his brethren, than others who lived in the splendour of the world, and in greater activity;—let us compare with him, I say, those noble Romans, of whom the younger Pliny gives an account, who in a lingering and desperate illness ended by their own hands, with the tranquillity of philosophers, a life which appeared to them useless and unworthy. We would not condemn those noble spirits who were not favoured with the privilege of knowing the gospel. But where do we find the true dignity of man, the true elevation founded on humility, which therefore nothing can drag down or deprive of its crown?

PART IV.

SKETCHES FROM THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS IN THIS PERIOD.

The operations of Christianity are certainly always the same as far as they depend on its peculiar nature and its relations to human nature; but it makes a difference whether Christianity first of all effects an entrance among nations who have hitherto been entirely unacquainted with it, either on the stand-point of barbarism or of a certain culture proceeding from other religious elements, or whether it connects itself with a Christian tradition already existing. Even in the latter case it will always have to renew the combat with the same counteraction of the nature of the old man, which among nations as yet entire strangers to Christianity comes forward openly and uncovered; but where a Christian tradition exists, is recognizable only as concealed under a Christian exterior. And even among nations with whom Christianity has already gained an entrance, there are always classes of persons who in their rude and neglected state have remained almost alien to the influences of Christianity, and hence require a fresh missionary agency; so that the distinction of a home and a foreign mission is, under such circumstances, a correct one.

In reference to foreign missions, it is necessary to distinguish the various stand-points of the people to which the missionary agency is directed; whether they are altogether a rude people, or such who already possess a certain marked culture; but the principle of Christianity will be always able to prove its transforming power, whether, through the divine

life which is engrafted on the rude stock of the natural man, the seed of all human cultivation is at the same time imparted, or whether a new transforming spirit is infused into an already existing cultivation. In this last case, Christianity will find its point of connection in a national culture already expressed; but this must be purified, transformed, and animated anew by that spirit of a higher life of which everything not yet born of the Spirit is destitute; in the former case, Christianity will communicate the first impulse and generative power of every kind of culture, such as may correspond to the peculiar genius of the nation. Of this we have a specimen in the operation of Christianity during the period of its first appearance; the other is shown in the effects of Christianity among the nations of Germanic origin, in whom Christianity prepared the peculiar culture of the Middle Ages.

If on the stand-point of antiquity the existing contrarieties between nations appeared invincible, and mental culture the privilege of certain races, Christianity, on the contrary, leads us to distinguish between what is founded in the original nature of man as he came out of the hands of his Creator, and what proceeded first of all from sin. It teaches us that as all nations are descended from one common origin (Acts xvii.), and have received in virtue of this descent the same nature destined to be the image of God; therefore also, by virtue of redemption and regeneration, this image is restored in all, and whatever has been the result of depravity through sin (the ground of all contrarieties and divisions) must be overcome. And Christianity is able (of which the history of missions is constantly giving proofs) to realize that which it puts forward as its idea, aim, and requirement; although the differences in the mental endowments of nations and individuals continue, Christianity can communicate to all the same higher life; it can equally in all produce the consciousness and effect the realization of that on which alone the true dignity of man depends. But by what means has Christianity accomplished this? What was the peculiarity of the process of culture everywhere put in action by it? It is one of our Lord's sayings that new wine must not be put into old skins, nor a new piece of cloth into an old garment, but all must become new. The same law applies to the education of nations as to that of individuals. It is not the method of Christianity to reform

and to mould from the outside—to begin with combating barbarism and vice first of all in single outbreakings—lest the unclean spirit thus driven out should return with seven others more wicked than himself, and the last state of the man be worse than the first (Luke xi. 26). Christianity did not begin with forcing the old nature into an outward discipline or moral training; it did not impress on the nations a culture already complete, and cast in a foreign mould, as has happened in other attempts at culture, which repress the fresh life of individuality, and contain in them the germ of malformation: on the contrary, attaching itself to the consciousness of sin, by which man feels himself separated from God, or arousing this consciousness where it was dormant, it imparted to those who had it the joyful tidings of redemption, from the appropriation of which was developed the new life of faith and love, the antagonist of all barbarism and false culture, and the mainspring of all true culture.

That such was the operation of Christianity, Athanasius bears witness in an age when this new creation began to show itself among the tribes of Germanic origin, who by their wars were brought into connection with the Roman empire. "Who among men,"* he says, "could ever tra-

* Τίς πώποτε ἀνθρώπων ἠδυνήθη διαβῆναι τοσοῦτον, καὶ εἰς Σκύθας, καὶ Αἰθίοπας, ἢ Πέρσας, ἢ Ἀρμενίους, ἢ Γόθους, ἢ τοὺς ἐπέκεινα τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ λεγομένους, ἢ τοὺς ὑπὲρ Ἴρκανίαν ὄντας, ἢ ὅλως τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους καὶ Χαλδαίους παρελθεῖν, τοὺς φρονοῦντας μὲν μαγικὰ, δεισιδαίμονας δὲ ὑπὲρ τὴν φύσιν καὶ ἀγρίους τοῖς τρόποις, καὶ ὅλως κηρύξαι, περὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ τῆς κατὰ εἰδώλων θρησκείας, ὡς ὁ τῶν πάντων κύριος, ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ δύναμις, ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, ὃς οὐ μόνον ἐκήρυξε διὰ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ μαθητῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔπεισεν αὐτοὺς κατὰ διάνοιαν τῶν μὲν τῶν τρόπων ἀγριότητα μεταθέσθαι, μηκέτι δὲ τοὺς πατρῴους σέβειν θεοὺς, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐπιγινώσκειν καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ τον πατέρα θρησκεύειν. Πάλαι μὲν γὰρ εἰδωλολατροῦντες Ἕλληνες καὶ βάρβαροι κατ' ἀλλήλων ἐπολέμουν, καὶ ὡμοὶ πρὸς τοὺς συγγενεῖς ἐτύγχανον. Οὐκ ἦν γάρ τινα τὸ σύνολον οὔτε τὴν γῆν οὔτε τὴν θάλασσαν διαβῆναι χωρὶς τοῦ τὴν χεῖρα ξίφεσιν ὁπλίσαι, ἕνεκα τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀκαταλλάκτου μάχης. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ ἡ πᾶσα τοῦ ζῆν αυτοῖς διαγωγὴ δι' ὅπλων ἐγίνετο, καὶ ξίφος ἦν αὐτοῖς ἀντὶ βακτηρίας, καὶ παντὸς βοηθήματος ἔρεισμα· καίτοι, ὡς προεῖπον, εἰδώλοις ἐλάτρευον, καὶ δαίμοσιν ἔσπενδον θυσίας, καὶ ὅμως οὐδὲν ἐκ τῆς εἰδώλων δεισιδαιμονιάς ἠδυνήθησαν οἱ τοιαῦτα φρονοῦντες μεταπαιδευθῆναι. Ὅτε δὲ εἰς τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ διδασκαλίαν μεταβεβήκασι· τότε δὴ παραδόξως ὡς τῷ ὄντι κατὰ διάνοιαν, κατανυγέντες, τὴν μὲν ὠμότητα τῶν φόνων ἀπέθεντο, καὶ οὐκ ἔτι πολέμια φρονοῦσι·

verse so large a portion of the earth among the Scythians, Æthiopians, Persians, Armenians, or Goths, or those who are situated beyond the ocean, or those above Hyrcania, or finally, the Egyptians and Chaldeans, who practise magical arts, and are unnaturally superstitious and rude in their manners; who could address them concerning virtue, and temperance, and idolatry, but the Lord of all, the power of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who not only addressed men by his disciples, but persuaded them in their minds to lay aside the rudeness of their manners, no longer to worship the gods of their respective countries, but to acknowledge him, and through him to worship the Father? For in ancient times the idolatrous Greeks and barbarians made war with one another, and were cruel to their own kindred; nor in general could any one travel by land or water without arming his hand with the sword, on account of their incessant fight-

πάντα δὲ αὐτοῖς εἴρηναῖα, καὶ τὰ πρός φιλίαν καταθύμια λοιπόν ἔστι. Τίς οὖν ὁ ταῦτα ποιήσας, ἢ τίς ὁ τοὺς μισοῦντας ἀλλήλοις εἰς εἰρήνην συνάψας, εἰ μὴ ὁ ἀγαπητὸς τοῦ πατρὸς υἱός, ὁ κοινὸς πάντων σωτὴρ Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, ὃς τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπῃ πάντα ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμῶν σωτηρίας ὑπέστη; καὶ γὰρ ἄνωθεν ἦν προφητευόμενον περὶ τῆς παρ' αὐτοῦ πρυτανευομένης εἰρήνης, λεγούσης τῆς γραφῆς· Συγκόψουσι τὰς μαχαίρας αὐτῶν εἰς ἄροτρα καὶ τὰς ζιβύνας αὐτῶν εἰς δρέπανα, καὶ οὐ λήψεται ἔθνος επ' ἔθνος μάχαιραν, καὶ οὐ μὴ μάθωσιν ἔτι πολεμεῖν. (Jes. ii. 4.) *Καὶ οὐκ ἄπιστόν γε τὸ τοιοῦτον, ὅπου καὶ νῦν οἱ τὸ ἄγριον τῶν τρόπων βάρβαροι ἐμφυτον ἔχοντες, ἔτι μὲν θύοντες παρ' αὐτοῖς εἰδώλοις, μαίνονται κατ' αλλήλων, καὶ χαρὶς ξιφῶν οὐδεμίαν ὥραν ἀνέχονται μένειν. Ὅτε δὲ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ διδασκαλίας ἀκούσιν, εὐθέως ἀντὶ μὲν πολέμων, εἰς γεωργίαν τρέπονται· ἀντὶ δὲ του ξίφεσι τὰς χεῖρας ὁπλίζειν, εἰς εὐχὰς ἐκτείνουσι. Καὶ ὅλως, ἀντὶ τοῦ πολεμεῖν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς, λοιπὸν κατὰ διαβόλου καὶ τῶν δαιμόνων ὁπλίζονται, σωφροσύνῃ καὶ ψυχῆς ἀρετῇ τούτους καταπολεμοῦντες. Τοῦτο δὲ τῆς μὲν θεότητος τοῦ σωτῆρός ἐστι γνώρισμα· ὅτι ὁ μὴ δεδύνηνται ἐν εἰδώλοις μαθεῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, τοῦτο παρ' αὐτοῦ μεμαθήκασι· τῆς δὲ δαιμόνων καὶ εἰδώλων ασθενείας καὶ οὐθενείας ἔλεγχος οὐκ ὀλίγος ἐστὶν οὗτος. Εἰδότες γὰρ ἑαυτῶν δαίμονες τὴν ἀσθένειαν, διὰ τοῦτο συνέβαλον πάλαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καθ' ἑαυτῶν πολεμεῖν, ἵνα μὴ παυσάμενοι τῆς κατ' ἀλλήλων ἔριδος, εἰς τὴν κατὰ δαιμόνων μάχην ἐπιστρέψωσιν. Ἀμέλει μὴ πολεμοῦντες προς ἑαυτους οἱ Χριστῷ μαθητευόμενοι, κατὰ δαιμόνων τοῖς τρόποις καὶ ταῖς κατ' ἀρετὴν πράξεσιν ἀντιπαρατάσσονται, καὶ τούτους μὲν διώκουσι, τὸν δὲ τούτων ἀρχηγὸν διάβολον καταπάλουσιν, ὥσπε ἐν νεότητι μὲν σωφρονεῖν, ἐν πειρασμοῖς δὲ ὑπομένειν, ἐν πόνοις δὲ καρτερεῖν, καὶ ὑβριζομένους μὲν ἀνέχεσθαι, ἀποστερουμένους δὲ καταφρονεῖν· καὶ τό γε θαυμαστὸν, ὅτι καὶ θανάτου καταφρονοῦσι, καὶ γίνονται μάρτυρες Χριστοῦ.*—Athanas. *de Incarnat.* § 51, 52.

ing with one another; for the whole course of their lives was spent in the practice of arms, and a sword was to them in place of a staff, and the instrument resorted to on every occasion; and as I have already said, they worshipped idols and offered sacrifices to demons, and those who were thus minded could not be trained to give up their idolatrous superstition. But when they passed over to the doctrine of Christ, then in a wonderful manner, being filled with compunction, they renounced their cruel slaughterings, and no longer meditated wars; but all was peaceful and tending to friendship. But who effected this? who united in peace those that hated one another? who but the beloved Son of the Father, the common Saviour of all, Jesus Christ, who in love submitted to all things for our salvation? for from the beginning it was prophesied concerning the peace which was to be effected by him, as the Scripture saith, 'They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' (Isa. ii. 4.) And this is no longer incredible, since we already see how barbarians whose savageness of manners was innate, as long as they sacrificed to their gods, rage against one another, and never remain a single hour without their swords; but when they heard the teaching of Christ, immediately, instead of wars, they turned to husbandry; instead of arming their hands with swords, they stretched them forth in prayer. In a word, instead of fighting with one another, they arm themselves henceforth against the devil and demons, warring against them with discretion and manliness of soul. This is a mark of the divinity of the Saviour, that what men were unable to learn while they lived in idolatry, they have learnt from him; nor is this an insignificant proof of the weakness and worthlessness of demons and idols. For the demons knowing their weakness, on this account set men to fight with one another, lest ceasing from their mutual strife, they might turn to fight against the demons. Certainly the disciples of Christ, instead of making war on one another, set themselves in array against the demons by the habits and deeds of virtue; they chase them and mock their leader, the devil; in youth they are sober-minded; in temptations they endure; in labours they persevere; being insulted, they forbear; and when despoiled, they

despise; and what is wonderful, they despise death and become martyrs for Christ." Thus also Jerome in his times saw, like Athanasius, a fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, when men of the Gothic tribes, who were regarded by the Greeks and Romans as uncivilized barbarians, proposed questions to him respecting the interpretation of the Scriptures; and when zeal for the study of the Scriptures spread itself among this rude people, as we have seen in modern times among the tribes of Australia, in whom Christianity has implanted the germ of civilization. "Who could believe* that the barbarous tongues of Goths should inquire after the Hebrew original, and that while the Greeks sleep or rather quarrel with one another, Germany should investigate the word of God? Now, 'of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.' (Acts x. 34, 35.) The fingers which were most apt to handle arrows, are now softened enough to guide a pen; and warlike breasts are changed to Christian meekness." He then quotes a passage in Isaiah, similar to that referred to by Athanasius: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox." (Isa. xi. 6, 7.) "Not," Jerome adds, "that simplicity shall pass into savageness, but that savageness shall learn simplicity."

As such an effect could only proceed from Christianity, so nothing but Christianity could give the impulse and the power by which rude nations received a divine life. What was it that impelled men to forsake their kindred and native land, and to give themselves up to numberless toils and mortal perils in the midst of barbarians? It was the consciousness of the Saviour's love which induced him to ex-

* Quis hoc crederet ut barbara Getarum lingua Hebraicum quæreret veritatem; et dormitantibus immo contendentibus Græcis, ipsa Germania Spiritûs Sancti eloquia scrutaretur? . . . Dudum callosa tenendo capulum manus, et digiti tractandis sagittis aptiores, ad stilum calamumque mollescunt; et bellicosa pectora vertuntur in mansuetudinem Christianum.... Non ut simplicitas in feritatem transeat, sed ut feritas discat simplicitatem. Hieronymus, *Ep.* 106, ed. Vallars. I. i. 641.

change his glory for human misery, and to suffer death for sinners. The feeling of this love impelled them to show similar love to their brethren who were still estranged from God, in order to impart the salvation they had through grace obtained to others for whom they were ready to hazard every thing.

But since Christianity operated on the formation of uncultivated nature throughout all its parts and powers, by commencing at the heart, and thence spreading its influence to the outward life, since it had nothing ready to bestow excepting the germ of a divine life, from which everything else would be developed spontaneously, but gradually; such being the case, Christianity had to carry on a long contest with barbarian rudeness, though it would in the end completely vanquish it. Persons who utter vain lamentations over the rudeness of certain ages of the church do not consider, in the first place, that the true dignity of man does not consist in the harmonious cultivation of all the spiritual and moral tendencies of his nature, but in that divine life received into the interior of the soul, from which, when it has penetrated the stock of human nature from the root up to all the branches, that harmonious culture is a necessary result which yet, till human nature is thus penetrated, may coexist with a rudeness predominant in the mass, and advances along with it. Thus we find, in the midst of the rudest ages, operations of the genuine Christian spirit, or revelations of that divine life in humanity, as we have noticed in the preceding pages, and such are not altogether wanting in succeeding times. That fire which the Redeemer came to kindle among the human race has never ceased to burn in any century, either with a clearer or duller flame. The stream of the Holy Spirit advances through all ages, flowing with a clearer or more troubled current. That which is highest and deepest in humanity, descending from heaven and rising to heaven, remains always the same, exalted above the alternations of time, and all who have a share in it feel and know that they are one with the company of believers of all times, and in all places. On this account the idea of progress that belongs to the sphere of the changeable cannot be applied here.

We must not, then, forget that the rude stock of humanity

necessarily communicated its rudeness to the church on its first appearance, in order to be trained by it, which, in virtue of human freedom, could take place in no other way.

Christianity indeed can be propagated in a few generally intelligible doctrines, which verify themselves as the power of God in the souls of men. The experience of the present age among Hottentots, Negroes, and Greenlanders, as well as of former ages, shows that these doctrines can find entrance even among those who are destitute of all culture; for everywhere there lies in human nature that which has an affinity to God, which must be brought into self-consciousness by the revelation of its original source, be freed from the covering of its ancient corruption by the breath from above, and redeemed from its imprisonment. Irenæus could appeal to the fact, that without paper and ink, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the doctrines of salvation had been inscribed on the hearts of those who were unacquainted with the alphabet, and could not understand a doctrine expressed in writing. But experience also teaches, that the divine doctrine could never have been propagated in an abiding manner, unless, in conjunction with the oral enunciation, the written records had been given, from which every age and every individual can deduce it afresh in its purity, and appropriate in a suitable peculiar form. By the propagation of these original records the divine contents may be preserved from falsification, or, where they have been falsified, may be restored to their original purity. In truth, all things that proceed from the operation of pure, genuine Christianity, all things which throughout every age have been thought, willed, done, and established in a genuine Christian spirit, stand in an intimate connection with one another; all the operations of the Holy Spirit in the life of humanity form a great invisible chain; and it must impart a holy joy, when we can recognise the manifestation of this chain in history, and trace a Christian tradition in this sense throughout all ages, in all places which the preaching of the gospel has reached, and under all church forms. Yet this operation of the Holy Spirit (as well as the Christian tradition proceeding from it) is nowhere and never pure and untroubled, but is everywhere and always obscured by the mixture of the carnal and the undivine. Everywhere, and always, we find in the

tradition the Antichristian by the side of the Christian, just as each individual must detect this admixture in his own inward and outward life; and what is shown on a small scale in the life of every individual Christian, appears in larger dimensions in the life of the whole church. We should be always in danger of mingling with one another the Christian and the unchristian, the fruits of the spirit and those of the flesh, if we had not in the volume of the Divine Word, which purely represents to us the operation of the Holy Spirit, a certain source of knowledge, a sure purifying principle, a fixed standard, in order that we may separate the divine and the undivine from one another, whether in our own hearts or in the tradition of the whole church.

And further, the experience of all ages teaches us, that Christianity has only made a firm and living progress, where (in accordance with the tendency of its peculiar nature when it operates with vital power) from the first it has brought with it the seeds of all human culture, although this can only be developed by degrees. Among a nomadic people, as is proved, for example, by the history of the Arab tribes, Christianity cannot maintain itself. It may, indeed, gain an entrance here, as under all other forms of social life; but if it really takes firm root, it must bring about a complete revolution in the whole manner of living. Hence the Christian instructors of these rude tribes very wisely endeavoured to impart a knowledge of the art of reading along with Christianity, to insure its continued progress, and with it the implantation of all culture for the people and the country. Thus the eminent Ulphilas, in the fourth century, invented an alphabet for the Goths, and gave them the word of God in their own language. Patrick also gave a written character along with Christianity to the Irish; he imparted to his scholars the little stock of knowledge which he himself possessed, and zeal for the acquisition of more. The monasteries of Ireland, which by its remoteness and insular position, was more secure against the devastation which the other parts of Europe suffered from, became schools where, in quiet retirement, religion and science were fostered in close connection with one another, and from which, at the same time, Christianity and the seeds of scientific culture were transported to other countries; as the Abbot Alcuin, when he

required of the Irish monks, that henceforth it should be their endeavour, "that through then, and from them, the light of truth might shine to many parts of the world," reminded them that, in ancient times, the most learned teachers came from Ireland to Britain, France, and Italy, and conferred great benefits on the Christian churches. While other religions, resting in a blind belief, dreaded the light of science which exposed the unsoundness of their principles, Christianity, on the contrary, as soon as it began to penetrate the spiritual life of mankind or of a nation, or where it began to manifest itself in fresh purity and splendour, entered into a league with scientific culture. Thus it was at the Reformation, that work of God for the restoration of the apostolic church. Luther, in a letter to Eoban Hess, in the year 1523, beautifully remarks, "I see that there was never any remarkable revelation made of the Word of God, unless he prepared the way by the revival and flourishing of languages and literature, as so many precursors like the Baptist."*

When the Christian church was established in England among the Anglo-Saxons, such a desire after knowledge seized many persons of all classes that they eagerly resorted to the cells of the Irish monks, who communicated to them in Christian love both spiritual and bodily sustenance. They supplied them daily with food, books, and instruction. In the second half of the century, the venerable Theodore of Cilicia, brought philosophy from Greece, and, as archbishop of Canterbury, travelled through all England with his friend the Abbot Hadrian, and endeavoured to collect scholars around him. The knowledge which in this manner was diffused through the English church was collected during the following age into a whole, by the presbyter and monk Bede, a man distinguished for his deep and simple piety, no less than for his unquenchable thirst for knowledge. This eminent person, who shone as the light of his own age and of succeeding times, says of his own life from his seventh year: "I have applied with the utmost diligence to the study of the Holy Scriptures; and in observing the rules of the monastery and the daily attention to singing in the

* Luther's *Briefe*, herausgegeb. von Dr. De Wette, II, 313.

church, it was always my delight to learn, to teach, or to write something."

The last days of this model of a faithful Christian teacher, who died in the exercise of his vocation, surrounded by his pupils, who were devoted to him with ardent love, have been described by one of their number, named Cuthbert. He tells us that Bede, during the last weeks of his life, suffered from an illness which brought him to his end in his sixty-third year. A.D. 735: "He lived," says Cuthbert, "joyfully, praising God day and night, yea, at all hours, till the feast of Ascension; he gave us, his scholars, daily lessons, and the rest of his time he occupied in singing psalms. The whole night, a small part excepted, he spent in watching with joy and thanksgiving, and when he woke from a short sleep, he lifted up his hands and began his thanksgiving again; he sang the words of the Apostle Paul, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;' he sang also many other passages from Holy Writ, and also several Anglo-Saxon hymns; he sang antiphonies (according to the custom of his church and of our own), and among the rest, the one, 'O King of glory, Lord of might, who to-day has ascended as Conqueror above all heavens, leave us not as orphans, but send to us the promised Spirit of the Father. Hallelujah!' And when he came to the words 'Leave us not as orphans,' he burst into tears; and after a lesson he began again; we wept with him, sometimes we read, sometimes we wept: indeed we could not read without tears. He often thanked God that he had sent him this sickness, and said: 'God chasteneth every son whom he loveth.' He often repeated the words of St. Ambrose: 'I have not so lived as to be ashamed to live among you; but neither am I afraid to die, for we have a gracious Lord.' Besides the lessons that he gave us, and the singing of psalms, he composed during this time two important writings,—a translation of John's gospel into our vernacular tongue for the good of the church, and a selection from Isidore of Seville; and said, 'I do not wish my scholars to read what is incorrect, and after my death to labour without profit.' On the Tuesday before the feast of Ascension, his sickness got worse, his breathing was difficult, and his feet began to swell; but he spent the whole day cheerfully and dictated; sometimes he said: 'Make haste to

learn; I know not how long I may remain with you, whether my Creator may not soon take me to himself." The following night he spent awake in thanksgiving; and when Wednesday came, he commanded us diligently to continue writing what we had begun. After this we carried, as was customary on that day, the relics in procession; one of us said to him, 'Dear teacher, we have yet one chapter to translate: will it make you worse if we still ask you questions?' He answered, 'It is not difficult; take the pen and write quickly.' About three o'clock he said to me: 'Run quickly and call the priests of this convent to me, that I may impart to them the gifts that God has bestowed upon me; the rich of this world seek to give gold and silver, and other precious things, but I will give with greater love and joy to my brethren what God has given me.' He now requested each of them to repeat the service of the mass, and pray earnestly for him. They all wept, especially on this account, because he said that they would not see his face any longer in this world. But they rejoiced when he said: 'It is time that I should go to my Creator; I have lived long enough; the time of my departure is at hand; I long to depart and to be with Christ.' One of his scholars then said to him: 'Dear teacher, there is still one sentence to be written;' he answered, 'Write quickly.' The young man shortly after said: 'The sentence is written.' He answered: 'Thou hast spoken rightly, it is finished. Take my head in thy hand, for it gives me pleasure to sit opposite my sanctuary, where I have been used to kneel in prayer, so that sitting now I may call upon my Father.' He then placed himself in his cell on the ground and sung the doxology: 'Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;' and as he uttered the words 'Holy Ghost,' he breathed his last."

Boniface deserved well of the German people, among whom many missionaries had already laboured, for his exertions in making provision for popular instruction and improvement by founding churches, convents, and schools connected with them.

We have already spoken at the beginning of this work, of the various methods of conversion (part i. chap. i.); according as they proceeded from within in a purely spiritual manner, by an influence on the internal disposition; or according as

men, in whom the necessities of the higher life were not yet felt, were necessarily conducted from the temporal to the spiritual, from the outward to the inward, from the earthly to the divine. As to the latter, great effects were often prepared by circumstances that were trifling in themselves, but which in a certain connection acquired peculiar importance, and could not have come into notice but in connection with other influences of a higher kind. How important was the miraculous draught of fishes for the relation of the Apostle Peter to Christ! And thus both the ancient and modern history of missions teaches us that much is frequently effected by little outward circumstances towards the conversion of individuals and of nations. It makes indeed a great difference whether the impulse given from without leads to a genuine internal conversion, or whether its effect is merely something external.

Clovis, the pagan king of the Franks, was destitute of any special interest in religious matters; he lived according to the usages of his forefathers, without reflecting on religion. His gods were regarded by him only as powerful beings whom he feared, and whose help he sought to obtain in his wars. As he contemplated religion from this point of view, the disasters of the fallen Roman empire were a proof to him that the god of the Romans could be no powerful being. But he had married the pious Christian princess, Clotilda of Burgundy. She often conversed with him of the worthlessness of his gods, and of the almighty power of the God whom she worshipped; Clovis always met her with the above-mentioned argument. But far more than by her conversation, the mind of the uncultured pagan was wrought upon by the example of her pious life, in daily intercourse with which even the rudest could not be wholly unaffected, and by her confiding faith and prayers, though the king himself was unconscious of this impression, and found fault with her exhortations. Yet she obtained his consent to the baptism of their first child; but its death shortly after confirmed Clovis in his unbelief. The pious mother was not shaken in her faith by this event; she rather expressed her joy that her child was thought worthy of joining the assembly of the blessed in the garment of innocence; yet Clovis allowed her second child also to be baptized. It fell sick, and Clovis

at once foretold its death; but Clotilda prayed fervently and in faith for the restoration of her child. When this happy result took place she confidently announced it to her husband as an answer to her prayers. She availed herself also of another means, combining everything which might contribute to alter her husband's state of mind. From early times many churches were built over the graves of revered saints, especially martyrs, and were famed for the wonderful cures performed in them of certain disorders, especially those of the nervous class. Whether it was that there were special answers to prayer granted there—for the love of God meets the longing of the pious heart even where erroneous conceptions are mingled with it, as in the case of the afflicted woman in Luke viii. 44; or the excitement of religious feeling produced great effects on the bodily condition—or, as it sometimes happened, there was a mixture of deception; be that as it may, Clotilda spoke in sincere faith, when she directed her husband's attention to such phenomena at the grave of Martin, the former bishop of Tours, and the less capable he was of explaining them the greater impression must these facts have made upon him.

Nicetius, bishop of Triers, wrote, in the year 561, respecting these occurrences to the Longobard queen, Clodeswinde, a grand-daughter of Clotilda: "You have heard from your grandmother Clotilda, how, since she came into France, she has won over King Clovis to the Catholic faith, and since he is a very shrewd man, he would not consent before he had ascertained the truth. But when he had examined the proofs of what I have mentioned above, he prostrated himself with humility at the grave of Martin, and permitted himself to be baptized without delay."

But another event gave the decisive stroke to the still wavering soul of Clovis. At the battle of Zülpich against the Alemanni, in the year 486, he was in a critical situation; he called on his gods for aid, but all in vain. He then turned to the God of the Christians, besought his help if he were the Almighty, and vowed to become a Christian. His victory was to him a proof of the power of the God of the Christians, as in the case of Constantine, the victory over Maxentius and Licinius. Remigius, archbishop of Rheims, who had been sent for by the queen, found easy access to

the king's mind, thus prepared. When he narrated the history of the Crucifixion, the king exclaimed, "If I had been there with my Franks, I would have chastised the Jews!"

Such outward leadings and impressions were often preparative measures for the Pagans, since by these they were taught to regard Christ as a powerful being, before they found in him a Redeemer from the misery of sin: first of all they only received the true God as a new deity along with their ancient gods, but at last they received Him as the only true God, and the Almighty Creator.. Anschar, the apostle of the North, who was supported by no human power in the publication of the gospel, often experienced the aid of Providence in difficult situations, by means of outward circumstances, which operated favourably on the minds of the Pagans. When he undertook, in the year 832, his second missionary expedition to Sweden, he found at first an unfavourable disposition in the Pagans, who were stirred up against Christianity by delusive notions of the wrath of their gods, on account of the reverence paid to a foreign god. A public assembly was held to deliberate on the subject, and a great impression was made by an old man, who rose up and said: "Hear me, O king and people! Several among us are already well acquainted with this God; that he can lend great assistance to those who hope in Him, for many of us have experienced this in dangers at sea, and in other manifold perplexities." We may compare this with what Adam of Bremen said of the Swedes, in the second half of the eleventh century: "When they are pressed in battle, they call out of the multitude of gods whom they reverence on one especially for help, and to him, after the victory is obtained, they especially devote themselves, and prefer him to the rest. But already they unanimously regard the God of the Christians as more powerful than all the rest; they say that the other gods have often deceived them, but that this one has in all emergencies rendered efficient succour."

When Otto, bishop of Bamberg, the apostle of Pomerania, in the year 1124, laboured for the establishment of the Christian church for the first time in Stettin, he succeeded in converting and baptizing a distinguished individual,

named Witstock. Although his knowledge of Christianity was by no means pure, yet a powerful faith was developed in him. Especially the image of the venerable bishop, whom he had seen labouring with so much self-sacrificing love and such firm confidence in God, seems to have left a deep impression on his mind; thus the Redeemer was wont to manifest himself most powerfully in the lives of those who truly received him, and by his image, expressed in their lives, attracted many others also to himself. In a battle he and others were taken, carried to the isle of Rugen, at that time inhabited by Pagans, and thrown into prison. During his imprisonment he found consolation and support in prayer. One night when he had fallen asleep after earnest prayer, the venerable bishop Otto appeared to him in a dream, and promised him aid. This encouraged him very much. By a remarkable train of circumstances he was released from prison. He found a boat floating by the shore, in which he ventured to trust himself to the waves, and the wind being favourable, he happily returned to Stettin in a short time. He regarded his deliverance as a miracle, as a testimony to Otto's holy life, and a proof of the divine origin of Christianity. It was to him a call from God, to testify among his countrymen of the God who had thus delivered him, and to labour for the spread of his worship among them. On his return he caused the boat to be hung up at the gate of the city, as a striking memorial of his escape, and a witness of that Being to whom he was indebted for it. When afterwards the bishop appeared again, and the inhabitants of Stettin, who were for the most part sunk in heathenism, Witstock said to him, in reference to this boat: "This boat is a testimony to thy holy life, a confirmation of my faith, and a proof that God has sent me to this people." And he was the special instrument of preparing the way for the preaching of Bishop Otto, and bringing back those who had fallen away to the Lord.

Edwin, the pagan king of Northumberland, at the beginning of the seventh century, forms a beautiful contrast to Clovis, who showed so little interest in divine things. The first step towards his conversion, as in the instance of King Clovis, was his marriage to a Christian princess of the kingdom of Kent. But Edwin was more susceptible of reli-

gious impressions, and more disposed to reflect on divine things. He first of all renounced idolatry, and for a considerable time was in a state of doubt. He allowed himself to be instructed more accurately in Christianity by Bishop Paulinus, who attended his Christian consort; conversed frequently on religion with those of his nobles whom he esteemed the wisest, and often appeared lost in solitary meditation. At last he assembled the nobles and wise men of his people, for a final consultation on this great question.

At this assembly one of the nobles came forward and said: "It appears to me that the relation the present life bears to that which unknown to us, is as if you were seated at table with your captains and servants in a well-warmed hall, while without the blasts and snow-storms of winter were raging, and a sparrow should quickly fly in at one opening and out at another. During the short interval it is under cover, it is not affected by the inclemency of the weather; but after a short moment of rest it vanishes and is again exposed to the storm. So this life of men on earth is only manifest as a brief interval, but of what goes before or comes after, we know absolutely nothing, Hence, if this new doctrine has brought anything more certain, we ought, in all justice, to follow it." Bishop Paulinus, who was present in the assembly, was required to explain the Christian doctrine, and the chief priest himself then said: "I have for a long time known that what we reverence is nothing, for the more zealously I have sought for the truth in this religion the less I have found it. But now I openly confess that the truth is evident to me in this discourse, which is able to bestow upon us this gifts of life, salvation, and eternal blessedness." And when the question was raised, who should make a beginning in the destruction of the idolatrous altars and temples, the priest offered himself immediately for the purpose: "For," said he, "who should be a more suitable person than I for this work, to destroy, according to the wisdom given me by the true God, the objects which I have worshipped in my foolishness?" In this connection Pomare, the first Christian king of Tahiti, as described by the English missionaries, may be mentioned as a contrast to Clovis and Constantine.

CHAPTER II.

THE LIVES AND LABOURS OF INDIVIDUAL MISSIONARIES.

1. *Patrick, the Apostle of the Irish.*

THIS remarkable man was trained for his important calling by a very peculiar way of life; and in his example we see how that infinite wisdom which conducts the development of the kingdom of God on earth knows how to produce great results by what, in the eyes of men, appears little. Patrick, in his native language called Sukkath, was born about the year 372, in the village of Bonaven, (since called, in honour of his memory, Kilpatrick), between the Scottish towns of Dumbarton and Glasgow. He was the son of a poor unlearned deacon belonging to the village church. No particular care was taken with his education, and he led a thoughtless life, without laying to heart the religious instructions of his parents, till towards his seventeenth year. It then came to pass that a severe chastisement by his heavenly Father woke him from his sleep of death to a higher life.

Pirates, of the savage tribe of the Scots who then inhabited Ireland, landed at Patrick's residence and carried him and others away as prisoners. He was sold into the service of a Scottish chief, who committed to him the care of his cattle. Trouble led his heart to God, whom during the days of quiet in his parent's house he had not thought of. Forsaken by men, he found in Him consolation and happiness, and now first learnt to know and enjoy the treasure which the Christian has in heaven. As he wandered about with the cattle in the ice and snow, he enjoyed intercourse with God in prayer and calm meditation. Let us hear him speak for himself, as he describes the change that now came over him in a narrative written by him at a later period. "I was," he says, "about sixteen years old, and knew nothing of the true God, when I and many thousand persons were carried away into captivity, according to our deserts, since we had departed from God, and had not observed his commands. There God opened my unbelieving mind, so that, although late, I thought of my sins, and turned with my whole heart

to the Lord my God, to Him who looked down on my low condition, had pity on my youth and ignorance, and before I knew Him, before I could distinguish between good and evil, guarded, protected, and cherished me, as a father his son. This I certainly know, that before God humbled me, I was like a stone sunk in the mire; but when He came who had power to do it, he raised me in his mercy, and put me on a very high place. Wherefore I must testify aloud, in order to make some return to the Lord for such great blessings in time and eternity, which no human reason is able to estimate." "When I came to Ireland and had daily charge of the cattle, I prayed many times a day; the fear of God and love to Him was increasingly kindled in me; faith grew in me, so that in one day I offered a hundred prayers, and at night almost as many; and when I passed the night in the woods or on the mountains, I rose up to pray in the snow, ice, and rain, before daybreak. Yet I felt no pain; there was no sluggishness in me such as I now find in myself, for then the spirit glowed within me."

After spending six years in the service of this chief, he believed that he heard a voice in his sleep which promised him a speedy return to his native land, and soon announced to him that a vessel was ready for him. In dependence on this call he set out, and after a journey of several days he met with a vessel which was on the point of sailing. But the captain at first would not receive the poor unknown youth. Patrick fell on his knees and prayed. He had not finished his prayer when one of the ship's company called him back and summoned him to go with him. After undergoing many sufferings, and experiencing, by the mercy that guarded him, many a deliverance from great dangers, he reached his home once more. Several years after, he was again taken prisoner by pirates. But after sixty days he regained his liberty by a special interposition of Providence, and returned home after many fresh dangers and toils. Great was the joy of his parents, to see their son again who had endured so much, and they entreated him now to remain constantly with them. But Patrick felt an irresistible call to carry the message of salvation to the people among whom he had passed his youth, and had been born again to the life of heaven. As the Apostle Paul was called by the Lord in a night-vision to carry

the first news of salvation to the people of Macedonia, so a man appeared to Patrick in a night-vision, with many letters. He gave him one, and Patrick read the words, "words of the Irish," and as he was reading, he thought he heard the united voices of many Irish who dwelt near the sea, exclaiming: "We beseech thee, child of God, come and again walk among us!" His feelings would not allow him to read any further, and he awoke. Another night he believed that he heard a voice from heaven in a dream, the last words of which were intelligible to him,—"He who gave his life for thee, He speaks in thee." He awoke full of joy. One night it was as if there was something in him and yet above him, that was not himself, praying with deep sighs, and at the close of the prayer it spake as if it was no other than the Spirit of God. He awoke and recollected the transcendent expressions of Paul respecting the intimate intercourse of God's children with His own Spirit. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." And (Rom. viii. 34): "Christ, who maketh intercession for us."

As the Almighty Shepherd of souls does not draw to himself, guide, and cherish all souls in exactly the same way, but manifests and imparts himself to them in various ways, according to his special purposes respecting them and their diversified wants, so he granted Patrick, by peculiar tokens of his grace, the pledge for the certainty of his intimate communion with him, and particularly for his call to publish the gospel to the inhabitants of Ireland. His relations and friends strove to keep him back, and represented that such an undertaking far exceeded his powers. We are informed of this by himself. "Many opposed my going, and said behind my back: 'Why does this man rush into danger among the heathen who do not know the Lord?' It was not badly intended on their part; but they could not comprehend the matter on account of my uncouth disposition." Yet nothing could turn him aside, for he depended on the power of the Lord who had imparted to him an inward assurance that He had called him, and would be with him. He says himself: "Whence did I receive so great and blessed a gift, to know and love God, to leave native land and parents, although many gifts were offered

me with tears if I would remain there? And against my wishes I was forced to offend my relations and many of my well-wishers. But according to God's guidance, I did not yield to them at all, not by my own power, but it was God who conquered in me and withstood them all, so that I went to the people of Ireland to publish the gospel to them, and suffered many insults from unbelievers, and many persecutions, even unto bonds, resigning my liberty for the good of others. And if I am found worthy, I am ready to give up my life with joy for his name's sake."

Thus Patrick went to Ireland in the year 431. The knowledge he had obtained of the Irish language was now of great use to him. By the sound of a kettle-drum he collected large assemblies of people in the open air, and told them of the sufferings of the Saviour for sinful humanity; and the word of the cross evinced its power on the hearts of many. Patrick met, indeed, with warm opposition. The priests and national bards, who had great influence, instigated the people against him, and he had to endure many severe persecutions. But he conquered by steadfastness of faith, by glowing zeal, and by the attractive power of love. The following incident furnishes a beautiful example of the power with which he operated on the minds of men.

He was at one time in a family of rank, the members of which he baptized. The son of the house, a youth, entertained such love for Patrick, that he resolved, however much his friends tried to dissuade him, to forsake all and to accompany the preacher of the gospel amidst all his dangers and toils. On account of his friendly, gentle disposition, Patrick gave him the name of Benignus. He availed himself of the agreeable voice of the youth in order to influence the people by means of singing. Benignus was zealously engaged with him in publishing the gospel to the time of his death, and he succeeded him in the pastoral office. Many of the national bards were converted by him, and sang in their own hymns of the worthlessness of idolatry and to the praise of God and Christ. Patrick devoted himself particularly to the heads or chieftains of the people. If they allowed themselves to be stirred up by the priests (the Druids) against the foreign religion, they could do much harm; and on the other hand, if they received the gospel, their example would render the

people more inclined towards it and form a counterpoise to the reverence felt for the Druids. The superior education of these chiefs also rendered it more easy to convince them of the absurdity of idolatry.* But Patrick was far from seeking merely to bring about an external conversion of the people by means of their chiefs; he frequently travelled round the whole island, accompanied by his pupils and assistants, read to the assembled people out of the Gospels and preached on what he had read. Young persons of both sexes were seized with the love of a religious life, and even female slaves, who would not allow themselves to be terrified by the threats and ill-treatment of their heathen masters.

Patrick received slaves who had suffered harsh treatment from their owners. When he found young men of the lower rank who seemed suited for a higher calling, he took care that they should be instructed and brought up to be teachers of the people. †

* The Apostle Paul says: "God hath not left himself without witness, among any nation, seeing he is not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being." He says of men in general: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them; for the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead." Amidst the reign of the darkest idolatry there were always men who acknowledged its futility, and rose to the belief in one Almighty God. It is true that this general belief, with more exact and certain knowledge of the relation of God to man, without the doctrine of a Redeemer, is by no means satisfactory for the religious and moral necessities of men. There is a prodigious difference between belief in the hidden God who dwells in light that no man approaches, whom no man has seen or can see, and the knowledge of God as revealed to us by the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father! But that belief may serve (as often happens) as a preparation for this knowledge. So, in the latter part of the fourth century, a great king of the Irish, Cormac, attained to this faith, and to a conviction of the futility of the idolatrous system of his Druid priests, especially when after laying down his government he gave himself to silent reflection and religious meditation in solitude; and no representations or arts of the Druids could induce him to return to them. The distinctness with which the account is given, speaks for the truth of the narrative, and later Christian monks and ecclesiastics would hardly have had a motive for inventing such a story.

† We have seen, in the first part of this work, how Christianity—of which the method is not to bring on a sudden revolution—although it allowed the outward existence of slavery, which contradicted the sentiment

From his youth up he had experienced, as we have seen, special divine leadings, by which his heart was deeply affected. As he now laboured with the ardour and power of faith, he was able to produce effects on rude minds to which common human power was incompetent. He saw himself also here supported by the peculiar guidance of that God whose word he published. Patrick speaks of this fact, not with spiritual pride, but full of the sense of his unworthiness and weakness, and from a consciousness of the power and grace of God that worked in him and by him. After speaking, in one of his letters, of the miracles which God had allowed him to perform among a rude people, he adds: "Yet I conjure all persons; let no one on account of these or similar things believe that I place myself on a level with the

it awakened of the general dignity of human nature, yet by the spirit and disposition it fostered, prepared the way for the total subversion of this institution. Thus Christianity, in the times of which we are now speaking, promoted the recognition of the equal dignity, as men, of those who by their lot were placed in a position in which no man ought to stand to a fellow man—that common dignity of being made in the image of God and the high destiny founded upon it, to realize which in all men the Son of God appeared in humanity and gave up his life for all. It was the frequent practice of missionaries and bishops of that age, to purchase heathen slaves, especially boys, and train them for missionaries to their countrymen. Thus, Gregory the Great bought up Anglo-Saxon slaves, through the managers of the estates of the Roman Church in Gaul; and in the same manner Amandus, the bishop of Maestricht, acted, who published the gospel in the Netherlands in the seventh century, of whom we are told: "When he met with prisoners or slaves who were brought over the sea, he baptized them, caused them to be well instructed, and, after he had given them their freedom, placed them in different churches; and of several we have since heard that they became bishops, priests, or abbots." Bonitus (Bonet), bishop of Clermont, in the seventh century, when he was governor of Provence, would condemn no one to slavery, but repurchased as many as he could find who were sold for slaves, and sent them back to their friends.

It contributed to set this class of persons in a more favourable light among the Franks, when the bishops (often influenced it is true by motives of self-interest) received persons of this condition into the clerical order. When Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, in the middle of the eighth century, declared that slaves were consecrated to the clerical office only from bad motives, he at the same time, in order to guard against an undervaluation of persons of this class, observed that "he would by no means exclude men of approved conduct among the slaves from the church and the clerical order, since God was no respecter of persons."

apostles or any of the perfected saints; for I am a poor, sinful, despicable man." But far more important to him than the miracles which he had performed, was that which filled his whole soul—that by him, who, till God had led him to himself by sharp correction, had felt so little concern about his own salvation—many thousands of the people who had hitherto known nothing of the true God, had been brought to salvation. "Be astonished," he says in his Confessions, "both high and low, who fear God, and ye fine talkers who know nothing of the Lord, understand and examine who it is has called a simple person like myself from the midst of those who were regarded as wise men and scribes, as mighty in words and works; and though I was despicable in the eyes of the world, he has called me by his Spirit to serve, though with fear and trembling, yet faithfully and blamelessly, the people to whom the love of Christ has led me. I must bless my God unceasingly, who has kept me faithful in the day of trial, so that at this time I can present my soul full of confidence as a living thank-offering to my Lord Christ, who has rescued me from all my distresses, so that I am obliged to say, 'Who am I, O Lord, and what is my calling? since thou hast so gloriously revealed thy divinity to me, that to-day I can continually rejoice among the heathen, and glorify thy name wherever I am, not only in prosperity but also in tribulation; so that whatever may befall me I can receive evil as well as good with an equal mind, and must continually thank God, who has taught me to believe in him as eternal truth!'"

Patrick endeavoured to avoid even the semblance of seeking his own glory or profit. A man who according to all human appearance was not fitted to accomplish anything so great, who was called from obscurity and meanness to so high a place, and hence one in whom, as it often happens, many who knew him earlier and only according to the flesh were not disposed to recognize what the Spirit of God had effected—for such an one it was necessary to be peculiarly careful to take away every pretext from those who were disposed to explain everything by flesh and blood, whatever they could not measure or conceive of by the common standard. When many persons, affected by gratitude and love to the teacher of salvation, their spiritual father, voluntarily

brought him presents, and pious females gladly surrendered their ornaments for the purpose, Patrick, in order to avoid every appearance of evil, refused them all, though the givers, both men and women, were at first offended. He himself gave presents to the heathen chiefs (one of whom had formerly plundered him, thrown him in fetters, and imprisoned him for a fortnight), in order to procure from them peace for himself and his flock; he redeemed many Christians from captivity, and was ready, as a faithful shepherd, to give up everything, even life itself, for his sheep. In his Confessions, which after he had been labouring thirty years in his calling, he addressed to his converts, he says: "In order that you may give me joy, and that I may always give you joy in the Lord, I do not repent of what I have done, and yet it is not enough for me. I give up and will give up far more. The Lord is powerful henceforth to grant that I may give myself up for your souls. I call God to witness that I have not written this in order to gain honour from you. That honour is enough for me which is not seen but is believed in the heart. God is faithful who has promised and who never lies. But I see myself already in this world exalted by the Lord above measure. I know very well that poverty and discomfort suit me much better than riches and a life of pleasure. Yes; even the Lord Christ became poor for our sakes. Daily I expected to be seized, to be dragged to slavery, or to be killed. But I feared none of all these things on account of the promises of heaven; for I have cast myself in the arms of the Almighty God who rules over all, as it is said in Psa. lv. 22 ('Cast thy burden on the Lord and he shall sustain thee').* Now I commend my soul to my faithful God, whom I serve as his messenger in my lowliness: but since he has no respect of persons, and has chosen me to this calling that I should serve him, as one of the least of his servants, how can I repay the Lord for all the goodness he has shown me? What shall I say unto my Lord, or what shall I promise

* Compare with this the beautiful words of Livinus (a preacher of the gospel at Brabant in the seventh century, who suffered martyrdom). "Blood-thirsty Brabant longs for my death. Wherein have I sinned against thee, inasmuch as I bring thee the message of peace? Peace is what I bring; why dost thou threaten me with war? But thy rage brings me a joyful victory—it will grant me a glorious crown of martyrdom. I

him? For I have no power unless he gives it me! But he tries the heart and the reins, and he knows that I greatly desire that he would give me the cup of suffering to drink as he has given it to others who love him. May my God never suffer it, that I should lose the church which he has won in the most remote corner of the earth. I pray God that he would give me perseverance, and think me worthy to bear a faithful testimony until the time of my departure; and if I have ever striven to accomplish anything for the sake of my God whom I love, I beseech him that I may be allowed to shed my blood for his name with those my new converts who have been imprisoned, even though I should obtain no burial, or even should my body be torn in pieces by wild beasts. I firmly believe, if this should happen to me, that I have gained my soul along with my body; for beyond a doubt we shall rise again in that day with the splendour of the sun, that is, with the glory of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, who is the Son of the living God, as fellow-heirs with Christ and bearing his image; for we shall reign by him, and through him, and with him. That sun which we see, daily rises for us according to God's command, but it will never reign, nor will its splendour endure for ever. All the unhappy beings who worship it will suffer punishment. But we adore believingly the true sun—Christ, who will never set; and also he who does his will shall never set, but will live for ever, as Christ lives for ever, and reigns with God the Father Almighty, and with the Holy Ghost from eternity, both now and for ever."

Patrick would gladly have revisited his native land, Britain, his relations, and his old friends in Gaul, after many years' absence and labour, but he sacrificed his inclination to a higher call. "I would gladly," he says, "travel to my

know in whom I have believed, and my hope will not be put to shame. God is the surety. Who can doubt?"

Hic Brabanta furit meque cruenta petit.
Quid te peccavi, qui pacis nuntia porto?
Pax est quod porto: cur mihi bella moves?
Sed qua tu spiras feritas, sors læta triumphi,
Atque dabit palmam gloria martyrii.
Cui credam novi, nec spe frustabor inani.
Qui spondet Deus est; quis dubitare potest?

—Livinus, *Mabillon. Act. Sanct.* sæc. II, fol. 404.

parents in my native land, and also visit the brethren in Gaul, to see once more the faces of the saints of my Lord. God knows that I wish it very much; but I am bound by the Spirit, who testifies that he will pronounce me guilty if I do this, and I dread lest the work I have begun should fall to the ground."

2. *Monasticism in Ireland.—Columban.*

The wild parts of Ireland became, from the example of Patrick, covered with monasteries erected by the hard labour of the monks. The Irish monasteries were distinguished for strict Christian discipline, for industry, zeal for the knowledge of the Scriptures and general knowledge, as much as they could collect of it. The Irish monks fetched knowledge from Britain and France; they preserved this knowledge, and digested it in their monastic retirement, and were destined to bring back the seeds of science along with more living Christianity to the districts from which they had formerly received these seeds, but where they were choked by the spreading barbarism.

The most renowned of the Irish monasteries, and a seminary for missionaries and teachers of the rude nations, was that of Bangor, founded by the Abbot Comgal, who had three thousand monks under his care. From this school the Irish abbot Columban came forth, in the latter part of the sixth century. When about thirty years old, he felt an impulse to go out amidst difficulties and dangers, to publish the gospel, and to plant Christian discipline among savage nations. In a letter written after suffering persecution in France, he says: "It was my wish to visit the heathen, and to preach the gospel to them."

His pupil and biographer, Jonas, gives the following account: "He began to long after a pilgrim's life, recollecting that command of the Lord, 'Go forth from thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land which I will show thee.'" He disclosed to Father Columban the glowing desire of his heart; that longing kindled by the fire of the Lord; that fire of which the Lord says, "I am come to kindle a fire on the earth." Columban himself says of that holy fire of love: "O that God would grant (since insignificant as I am, still I am his

servant), that he would awaken me out of the sleep of indolence, and so kindle that fire of divine love that this divine flame may always burn within me. O that I had the wood with which that fire might be continually nourished, that it might never more be quenched, but always increase within me. O Lord, give me, I beseech thee, in the name of Jesus Christ thy Son, my God, that love which can never cease, that will kindle my lamp but not extinguish it, that it may burn in me and enlighten others. Do thou, O Christ, our dearest Saviour, thyself kindle our lamps, that they may evermore shine in thy temple; that they may receive unquenchable light from thee, the unquenchable light that will enlighten our darkness, and lessen by us the darkness of the world. My Jesus, I pray thee, give thy light to my lamp, that in its light the most holy place may be revealed to me, in which thou dwellest as the eternal Priest, that I may always behold thee, desire thee, look upon thee in love, and long after thee. It belongs to thee to show thyself to us thy suppliants, O Saviour full of love, that we may know thee, love thee alone, think of thee alone day and night, that thy love may fill our souls, and that this love, so great, may never more be quenched by the many waters of this earth; as it is written, 'Many waters cannot quench love.' (Sol. Song. viii. 7.)"

Permission having been granted by the abbot, Columban, with twelve youths who were training under his guidance for ecclesiastics, repaired about the year 590 to France, where at that time, owing to the continual wars, the political disturbances, the remissness of the worldly-minded bishops who occupied themselves more about worldly business than about spiritual concerns, the greatest confusion and irregularity prevailed; among the monastic orders, especially, great degeneracy had spread, many convents having been given away by the princes to laymen of rank. The strict piety and superior knowledge of Columban obtained so much the greater reverence for him among a disorderly and ignorant multitude. He was requested to settle in the kingdom of Burgundy, and might have obtained a convent, in which he could have lived with his scholars in quiet comfort and great respectability. But he declared that he did not seek for earthly goods, but felt himself compelled to obey the words of

Christ, "Whoever will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." He now betook himself to an immense wilderness in the Vosges, and chose for his settlement the ruins of an ancient dilapidated castle called Anegray (*Anagrates*). As the monks were obliged to bring the land into a state of cultivation, at first they often suffered hunger; but Columban, even under such circumstances where human succour was wanting, maintained an unwavering confidence in God which could never be put to shame. At one time the monks had nothing to eat but the bark of trees and wild herbs, and their destitution was more pressing, because one of their number was ill, for whose restoration they could do nothing. Three days they had spent in prayer to obtain relief for their sick brother, when they saw a man standing at the door of the convent, whose horses were laden with sacks full of provisions. He told them that he felt obliged by a sudden impulse to assist with his means those who from love to Christ endured such privations in the wilderness. Another time they had for nine days suffered similar want, when the heart of another abbot was moved to send them provisions. When a foreign priest once visited them, and expressed his surprise that Columban could feel so easy, although he had so little corn in his granary, Columban replied: "If people faithfully serve their Creator, they will suffer no want; as it is written in the Psalm (xxxvii. 25), 'I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.' He who could satisfy five thousand men with five loaves, can easily fill our barns with meal."

To great power and activity for practical purposes, Columban joined a disposition for religious contemplation, taking delight in inward quiet; and the union in him of these two qualities, as in many pious men of that age, is a proof of his healthy Christian simplicity, of a soul resting firmly on God. He frequently went into the depths of the forest, carrying a Bible on his shoulder, and read as he walked, and meditated on what he read, or sat down with the Bible in his hand on the hollow trunk of a tree. On Sundays and feast-days he gladly retired to a cave or some other secret place, and gave himself up entirely to prayer, and meditation on divine things.

Such was the reverence in which Columban was held, that persons of all ranks flocked to him, and committed themselves to his guidance, or brought their sons to him for education. The number of monks was so great that one convent was not sufficient, and they were obliged to erect two others, also in forests, Luxeuil (*Luxuvium*) in Franche Comté, and Fontenay (*Fontanæ*).

As the highest object to which all the monastic regulations of Columban were adapted to form those who were placed under his guidance, he regarded self-denial, the total surrender of the will to God. In his instructions to the monks, he says many admirable things respecting this highest aim of internal improvement, this great concern of Christian sanctification, the one thing needful: "Whoever overcomes himself, treads the world under foot. No one who spares himself can hate the world. In the interior of his soul he either loves or hates the world." And in another instruction he says: "We must willingly surrender for Christ's sake what we love out of Christ. First of all, if it is necessary, our bodily life must be surrendered by martyrdom for Christ. Or if the opportunity be wanting for such blessedness, the mortification of the will must not fail, so that they who live henceforth, live not unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them. Let us therefore live to him, who though he died for us, is the life; let us die unto ourselves, that we may live to Christ. For we cannot live to him, if we do not first die ourselves, that is, our own wills. Let us be Christ's, not our own; we are bought at a dear price, truly so; for the Master gave himself for the servant, the king for his attendants, God for man. What ought we to give in return, when the Creator of the universe died for us sinners, who yet were his creatures? Believest thou that it is not necessary to die to sin? Certainly, thou must do that. Let us therefore die; let us die for life, since he who is the life died for the dead; that we may be able to say with Paul, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, who died for me;' for this is the language of the chosen. No one can die to himself, if Christ does not live in him. But if Christ be in him, he cannot live to himself. Live in Christ, that Christ may live in thee. We must take the kingdom of heaven by violence, since we have to contend not only with our adversaries, but most

earnestly with ourselves. It is a great misery when a man injures himself and is not sensible of it. If thou hast conquered thyself, thou hast conquered all things."

Although these quotations express the genuine spirit of Christian self-denial combined with love, yet this spirit did not show itself unalloyed in the monastic institutions that were founded by Columban. Though love predominated in his own disposition, and he strove to train his monks to the free love of the children of God, yet they were subjected to a strict legal discipline. They were obliged to exercise self-denial in the total annihilation of their own will, in slavish subjection to a foreign human will, which presented itself to them only as the organ of the Lord for their guidance. As instruments without wills of their own, they were to serve their superiors, in whom they believed that they saw the Lord himself, who guided them by their means. It was this spirit of making religion a matter of outward regulation, of mechanical obedience, which prevailed in the ages before the Reformation, until at that period the sign was given of the restoration of the liberty gained by Christ for his people. True humility refers itself to our relation to God in a sense that is applicable to no creature whatever. He who humbles himself before God, for that very reason humbles himself before no man, though ready to serve every man on his own stand-point in free love. He who bows his knee before God, bows it for that reason before no man. The spirit of true freedom is grounded in genuine humility; as the apostle says: "Ye are bought with a price; be not the servants of men." According to that false conception of a mind fettered by externals, a man, instead of subjecting his own will to God alone with inward self-renunciation, and letting himself act in the free self-determination of his own spirit, makes his own will subject to another man, by whom he lets himself be determined in all things—the very opposite of that line of conduct which the apostle enjoins in those words.

Columban, in his instructions to the monks, gives them the consolation that by that blind obedience they obtained so much greater rest and security, since in everything which they did by the command of another, they were free from responsibility, and the blame would fall on the individual from whom they had received commands according to *his* calling, while

their calling was only to obey. This gratifies the indolence of man, who would gladly be exempted from personal conflict and from that personal probation to which he is destined. But the divine plan of educating the human race is contrary to this, since man, having reached his majority, must attain by means of Christianity, walking in the light of his God, freely to prove all things with an enlightened reason, according to the Word of God, and to determine his conduct according to the law inscribed by the Spirit on his regenerated heart, apart from outward guardianship. What Columban prescribes to his monks as their aim, "that man should always be dependent on the mouth of another," is contrary to the spirit and genius of Christianity, which teaches man to depend only on the mouth of God.

It is always a perilous matter to attempt to break the will of man by the strict discipline that was employed in the instance before us; for the human will can only be truly subjected and transformed by the power of God, by the might of love, acting inwardly, so that giving itself up in its self-hood, it regains itself in a higher manner as the renovated organ of the Divine will. Frequently from the point of view assumed by the monkish system, the striving after a proper free development, which is implanted in a rational being created after the likeness of God,—the feeling that stirs powerfully in the breast of the young that he is created for God's likeness and glory, becomes confounded with a sinful, self-seeking striving, which indeed early attaches itself to it. Thus, the despotic compulsion which cannot distinguish one from the other, by powerfully repressing the proper free development, produces a crippled, stunted being. The self-will which is not to be subdued by human power, may either give birth to a proud high-mindedness called forth into so much unbending opposition by the compulsion from without, or if the self-will be broken, all fresh, proper life is destroyed, and there remains an obtuse slavish spirit, unsusceptible of everything higher; or such a distortion is the result, that with that slavish spirit is combined a pride veiled in the garb of humility—that sham humility of which Paul speaks in Col. ii. 23.

In this respect, what Anselm of Canterbury, at the end of

the eleventh century, said against the rigid monastic discipline is admirable. An abbot complained in conversation with him of the incorrigible youths, who would not be amended by all the correction he administered. Anselm replied, "You never cease beating the boys, and what sort of men will they be when they grow up?" "Stupid and brutish," answered the abbot. "A good sign for your method of education," said Anselm, "when you educate men into brutes!" The abbot answered, "Is that our fault? We try to compel them, in all manner of ways, to be better, and yet we effect nothing?" "You compel them?"* answered Anselm; "tell me then, I pray you, if you planted a tree in your garden, and inclosed it on all sides, so that it could not spread out its branches in any direction, and after some years transplant it in an open space, what kind of tree would it have become? certainly, a useless one, with crooked, tangled branches. And whose fault would it be, but your fault, who trained the tree in this over-compulsory manner?"

But to form a correct judgment of Columban, we ought not to forget under what circumstances he lived, what men he had to form, and with what difficulties he had to combat. Multitudes of men were to be governed, to be rescued from the prevailing wildness and licentiousness, and to be trained to industry, to the endurance of difficulties and privations of all kinds, and, as the highest end of all, to a truly spiritual life, devoted to God in self-renunciation. He himself says in a letter: "We must reach the city of the living God by the right way, through chastisement of the flesh, contrition of heart, labour of body and humiliation of spirit, and through our striving, while we do what is our duty, not as if we could merit anything, and, what is more than all, through the grace of Christ, faith, hope, and love."

In his instructions, Columban says: "Let the monk live

* Constringitis? Dic mihi, quæso, si plantam arboris in horto tuo plantares, et mox illum omni ex parte concluderes, ut ramos suos nullatenus extendere posset, cum eam post annum excluderes, qualis arbor inde prodiret? Profecto inutilis, incurvis ramis et perplexis; et hoc ex cujus culpa procederet, nisi tua, qui eam immoderate conclusisti? Certe hoc facitis de pueris vestris.—Anselmus, *Vit. Eadm.* § 30, *in Act. S. April.* tom. ii. p. 873.

in a convent under the discipline of a father, and in fellowship with many others, that from the former he may learn humility, and by means of the latter, patience; by the one he may learn silent obedience, by the others, gentleness; let him not do his own will: let him eat what is offered him; let him have just as much as he receives; let him fulfil the day's work prescribed to him. Let him go to bed weary; let him go to sleep while travelling, and although he has not slept enough, let him be compelled to get up. When he suffers unjustly, let him be silent. Let him fear the superior of the convent as a master, and love him as a father."

Yet with all his strictness of discipline, a spirit of paternal love animated the abbot, and hence, as we see from his life, so many were attached to his person. He always kept this end in view, so to train the monks that this punctilious arrangement should not become dead and mechanical,—that this strict discipline should not be an insupportable burden, but become a second nature, and that everything should be easy to them through the spirit of love and resignation. "If the monks learn the humility of Christ, his yoke will be easy, his burden will be light. Heart-humility is the repose of a soul wearied by its conflict with corrupt inclinations, its inward pain; it is its only refuge from so many evils, and the more completely it collects itself into this state from perpetual distraction with outward vanities, so much more entire is its repose, and it is refreshed within, so that even the bitter is sweet, and what before was too hard and too heavy for it, now becomes light and easy."

Columban's instructions to the monks show an endeavour to bring divine things close to their minds, and if we see how easily those who had to gain their daily bread by hard labour,—how easily, under the endurance of daily toil and earthly anxieties, they would forget the higher objects of the mind and heart, so much more worthy of honour must that man appear who sought to operate on these men by the power of Christianity, that in the midst of their conflict with their native rudeness they might regard the highest interests of the inner man as most important for themselves and others, and to avail themselves of that daily conflict as a means of exercising self-denial, resignation to God, and unconditional trust in him. One time, after laying the foun-

dation of the convent of Fontaines, Columban saw sixty monks toiling with hoes to loosen the soil, in order to prepare it for the future sowing, while only a small quantity of provisions to satisfy the hunger and thirst occasioned by this severe labour was in the magazine of the convent. How much was implied here! Here we see the power of faith, which can remove mountains. Others would have lost all pleasure and power for labour under such great difficulties and gloomy prospects, but Columban's strong faith inspired those who were under him with courage and power. The monks would experience that faith multiplies what a man has, and can create means where they are wanting, since it fills the heart of man with courage, power, and joy; as, on the contrary, unbelieving despondency lessens the gifts of God, since it weakens power, makes earthly wants doubly felt, and when the soul is given up to this feeling, it sinks down to earth, and adds anxiety for the future to the destitution of the present moment.

Some passages from Columban's instructions for his monks will bring before us his deep Christian feeling, and his endeavour to excite the same in them. Speaking against idle subtleties respecting the Trinity, he says: "Who can speak of the essence of God? How he is everywhere present and invisible, or how he fills heaven and earth and all creatures, according to those words, 'Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord?' (Jer. xxiii. 24.) The universe is full of the Spirit of the Lord. 'Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool.' God, therefore, is everywhere in his whole infinity; everywhere altogether nigh, according to his own testimony of himself. 'Am I not a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off?' We therefore seek after God not as one who is far from us, since we can apprehend him in our own inward souls: for he dwells in us as the soul in the body, if we are not dead in the service of sin. If we are susceptible of this, that he is in us, then we are truly made alive by him as his living members. 'In him,' says the apostle, 'we live, and move, and have our being.' Who shall search out the Most High according to this his unutterable and inconceivable essence? Who shall fathom the depths of the Godhead? Who shall boast that he knows the infinite God, who fills and surrounds all things, who pene-

trates all things, and is exalted above all,—whom no man has seen as he is? Let no one then venture to inquire into the unsearchable essence of God; only believe simply but firmly that God is and will be what he was, since he is the unchangeable God. God is perceived by the pious faith of a pure heart, and not by an impure heart and vain discourse. Art thou disposed to investigate the Unutterable with thy subtleties? then wisdom will be further from thee than it was (Eccles. vii. 24). Dost thou, on the contrary, apprehend him by faith? then wisdom will stand before thy doors. Wherefore we must implore the omnipresent invisible God himself that the fear joined with faith, and the love which cannot fail, may remain in us; that fear of God which joined with love will make us wise in all points; and piety commands us to be silent respecting the Unutterable." Of the happiness of those who possess vital Christianity, he says: "Who, in truth, is more happy than he whose death is life, whose life is Christ, whose reward is the Saviour; to whom heaven lowers itself, to whom Paradise stands open, for whom hell is closed, whose father is God, whose attendants are the angels." In the eighth instruction he says: "It becomes travellers to hasten homewards; they have cares as long as they are on their travels, but rest in their native country. Let us, then, who are travelling, hasten to our native country, for our whole life is like a day's journey. The first thing for us is, to love nothing here below, but to love only what is above; to long only after that which is above; to think only of that; to seek only our fatherland above, —there, where our Father is. Here, on earth, we have not our fatherland, because our Father is in heaven." Of love as the soul of the Christian life, he says: "What has the law of God prescribed more carefully, more frequently, than love? And yet you seldom find a person who properly loves. What excuse can we offer? Can we say that it is something laborious and difficult? Love is no labour; it is rather something sweet, something salutary, something healthful for the heart. If the heart is not diseased with sin, then its health is love. He who fulfils the law with the ardour of love, has eternal life; as John says: 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in

death. He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.' We must, therefore, do nothing but love, or we can expect nothing but punishment. May our gracious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, our God, the Creator of peace and love, imbue us with this love, which is the fulfilling of the law." Also in his exhortations and lessons for his scholars and friends, containing small poems, Columban expresses his ardent love of Christ. "Let no one," he there says, "live to himself, but let every one live only to Christ. If thou truly lovest Christ, then seek not thy own, but the honour of Christ. Love not thyself nor the world, but Christ alone."

Columban requires of the true monk, that he should unite steadfastness and power with gentleness and humility, in the conflict for truth and righteousness against the high and mighty ones of the world—that he should be ready to contend for what is essential—that he should be humble towards those who are cast down,* but honestly oppose the highminded—that he should be bold in the cause of truth—that he should show himself obliging and compliant towards the good, but invincible in conflict with the wicked.

In this spirit Columban acted in contending for Christian freedom and Christian moral discipline. By his zeal for strict discipline, and against the irregularities which had spread among the Frankish churches, and by his frankness, he necessarily made himself many enemies among persons of influence, both ecclesiastics and laymen, who gladly availed themselves of an opportunity to get rid of so troublesome a person. Columban had brought with him several peculiar usages from the Irish church, which differed widely from those of the Romish church, which had been universally adopted in those parts. As his convents in the forests formed a secluded whole unconnected with others, he wished to follow the practices of his fathers, and not to submit to the prevalent practice of the church. He might, indeed, have conceded certain external things, not of any importance in themselves, for the sake of securing what was more essential; but it was an object of some importance to him to place himself in opposition to an arrogant ecclesiastical authority, which refused to acknowledge the rights of Christian liberty,

* Humilis dejectis, rectus erectis.

and aimed, by its enactments, to force an uniformity in outward things. His enemies gladly availed themselves of this departure from the prevailing church usages, to excite a prejudice against him. Columban by no means wished to introduce all the usages relating to divine worship which he had brought from Ireland, though he believed they were preferable; all he desired was that he should be at liberty to follow his own method with the convents under his superintendence.

With Christian frankness, subjecting himself to no human authority in matters of religion, he addressed a letter to the bishop of Rome, Gregory the Great. He called on him not to bind himself by the authority of the earlier Roman bishops, but to examine freely, and to adopt whatever he found to be best: "In such a matter," he wrote to him, "you must not depend merely on your humility, or the dignity of the person, which often deceives. In such inquiries, perhaps a living dog is better than a dead lion (Eccles. ix. 4). Living saints may improve what had not been improved by a greater than themselves in a former age." Gregory, in a case which required a free examination of the truth, was not justified in a humility which would not permit him to submit the enactments of his predecessors to a fresh examination. At a later period, Columban wrote to the Roman bishop Boniface IV., saying that as they were connected with one another by unity of faith, since they agreed in believing with the heart, and confessing with the mouth, one Father in heaven, of whom are all things, and one Redeemer the Son of God, through whom are all things, and one Holy Spirit, in whom are all things,—he hoped it might be granted to him and his associates, without injury to the peace of the church, to continue in their own usages; as in former times, Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and Anicetus, bishop of Rome, without injury to the faith, separated from one another with uninterrupted love, and each one adhered to the customs he had received.

About the year 602, a Frankish synod was held to deliberate on this matter, and Columban addressed an epistle to it, full of zeal for the welfare of the church. As, partly owing to political disturbances in the kingdom of the Franks, and partly to the remissness of the bishops, who had involved

themselves too much in worldly concerns, the salutary institution of provincial synods had been for a long time neglected, Columban thanked God that the disputes with him had led to summoning such a synod, and he prayed God to grant that they might on this occasion be occupied with more important things relative to faith and practice. On this occasion he asserted, with all respect to his opponents, the great truth that if they did not evince by their lives that they had heard the voice of the true Shepherd, and follow him, they could not expect that those words which they uttered only as hirelings could meet with obedience.

He justly remarks (and it is a sentiment that ought to be laid to heart in all similar cases) that if all professed Christians were united to one another by the fellowship of love and the unity of the evangelical disposition, all disputes might easily be settled. "The diversity of practices and usages has certainly much injured the peace of the church; but if we only made haste to expel the poison of pride, envy, and vain ambition, by the exercise of true humility, according to the doctrine and example of our Lord, who said, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart,' we should love another as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all our hearts—since the humble cannot quarrel—since the truth will soon be known by those who seek to know which is most correct, with the same determination and the same anxiety after a knowledge of the truth—since no one is conquered excepting error, and no one glories in himself, but only in the Lord." He closes his letter with these words: "In order that we may mutually love one another without hypocrisy, let us contemplate closely the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ, and if we understand them, strive to fulfil them, so that through his teaching the whole church may strive towards the heavenly in a glow of holy zeal. May his undeserved grace vouchsafe to us that we may all renounce the world and love him alone, and seek after him with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Lastly, O father, pray for us, even as we, though persons of little account, pray for you, and regard us not as those who are strangers to you; for we are members of one body, whether we are Gauls, or Britons, or Irish, or of whatever other nation. May we, out of all nations, rejoice in the faith

and knowledge of the Son of God, and hasten to become a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, in which we mutually improve one another, care and pray for each other, and finally rule and rejoice with one another!"

An attack from another quarter led to important consequences for Columban. He was held in great respect by Thierry II., the king of Burgundy, where his convents were situated. He availed himself of this, to administer reproof to the king on account of his voluptuous life, and to urge him to a better course. But his influence on this side came into collision with the policy of the powerful grandmother of this prince, Brunehault—and she laid a plan, with the nobles and prelates, to whom Columban's proximity had long been offensive, to drive him away. It was not Columban's manner to evade the machinations that were formed against him. In accordance with his maxim "to be bold in the cause of truth, and unconquerable by evil," he met the plot with unbending firmness. At last, after five-and-twenty years of activity, he was banished from the country in the year 610. Orders were at first given that he should be sent back to Ireland, but peculiar circumstances prevented their execution. In his journeying through France, he met with many consolatory proofs that God was with him. When he had arrived with his followers at the city of Nantes, and was occupied with meditating in his cell, a beggar came before it. Columban caused the last measure of meal in his stores to be given to the hungry man. The two following days he was obliged to contend with want himself, and continued joyful in faith and hope, when suddenly some one knocked at the door, and it was the servant of a pious female of the city, whom she had sent with a considerable supply of corn and wine for him. From Nantes he wrote an epistle full of paternal love to the monks he had left behind in France, in which he exhorted them to unity and humility: "It were better," he wrote to them, "that you should not be together if you have not the same likings and dislikes." He represents God as addressing the proud self-righteous soul: "Since thou hast allowed thyself to be seduced by thy holiness to pride, now descend, and count thyself among sinners; for what is done in pride is of no value with me." Of a

monk, Waldolin, who was much beloved by him, he writes on the contrary: "God bless him! he is humble; give him a kiss, which in my haste I was prevented from doing." Columban then withdrew into Switzerland, near Tuggen and Pregentia (Bregenz), where he laboured several years for the conversion of the Suevi and Alemanni. Afterwards he went to Italy, and established in the vicinity of the Apennines the famous monastery of Bobbio, where he found rest for the last years of his life.

Still he was active to the last, in order to compose an ecclesiastical division which had existed in Italy from ancient times. The Emperor Justinian, who, by his indiscreet and despotic interference in church affairs, by his strong inclination to exercise his imperial power in making theologians instead of faithfully fulfilling the duties of his office, had caused such great disorders in the Greek Church, had also allowed himself to be moved, by the intrigues of a troublesome theological court-faction, publicly to brand as heretical the memory of three great Syrian fathers of the church (Theodorus, Theodoret, and Ibas), and the vacillating, weak-minded Roman bishop, Vigilius, had allowed himself to be compelled to favour the foolish undertaking of the emperor. As the later Roman bishops followed the decision of their predecessor, a division of the church in Italy was the consequence; for several churches of eminence in Istria and the Venetian territory disapproved of this decision. Many accusations against the orthodoxy of the Roman Church were occasioned by it. Columban now wrote a very respectful, but at the same time very frank epistle to Pope Boniface IV., in which he required from him an unprejudiced examination of this affair, and pressed upon him to take measures for restoring the peace of the church. "Watch," he writes to the pope, "first of all over the faith, and then to command the works of faith, and to root out vices; for your vigilance will be the salvation of many, as on the contrary your indifference will be the ruin of many. Our concern here is not persons, but the truth. As in virtue of the dignity of your church you are held in great honour, you need to take greater care not to lessen your dignity by any aberration; for the power will remain with you as long as you are in the right way. He is a true key-bearer of the kingdom of heaven, who by true knowledge opens it to

the worthy and shuts it against the unworthy. He who acts in an opposite manner, can neither open nor shut. Since from a certain pride you arrogate to yourselves greater authority and power in divine things, you may know that your power will be so much less in the Lord, although you only indulge these thoughts in your hearts; for the unity of faith in the whole world produces everywhere the unity of spiritual power; so that everywhere liberty is given by all to truth, and the entrance must be refused to error in the same manner by all." Then follows a beautiful exhortation which applies to so many divisions which arise from laying greater stress on subordinate differences than on unity in the essentials of faith, and thus the bond of love was broken. "Therefore quickly return to unity, beloved brethren, and do not prolong old controversies; but rather be silent, and consign these controversies to everlasting oblivion. When anything is doubtful, reserve it for the decision of God. But what is clear, or what man can judge, decide justly upon it without respect of persons. Mutually acknowledge one another, that there may be joy in heaven and earth over your peace and union. I know not how a Christian can quarrel respecting the faith with other Christians. Whatever the orthodox Christian who rightly praises the Lord may say, the other will say Amen, because both believe in the same and love the same."

Columban died in his seventy-second year, or a little older, after having, in the course of an active and very laborious life, scattered the seeds of Christian knowledge in France, Switzerland, and Italy, and, by the scholars whom he left behind him, made provision for its still wider propagation in succeeding ages.

3. *Gallus, the Apostle of Switzerland.*

Among the scholars whom Columban brought with him from Ireland to France, Gallus was one of the most distinguished. He was descended from a respectable Irish family, and was early intrusted by his pious parents to Columban to be educated for the service of the kingdom of God. Columban, who, as we have remarked above, was a zealous student of the Scriptures, deeply imbued the mind of youth with a love for acquaintance with the sacred volume. He knew how to discourse from the Scriptures with simplicity and fervour, and to

apply the word to the hearts of men. When Columban with his associates met with a hospitable reception from pious persons, and after laying down his luggage wished to have some portion of Scripture read, he called on his favourite scholar, Gallus, to perform this office, and at the same time to explain what was read. When they took up their residence among the ruins of the ancient castle of Bregenz, they met with an old dilapidated chapel which they resolved to consecrate for Christian worship, and in which they constructed their cells. But they found in that chapel three gilded images of idols which the pagans worshipped as tutelary divinities. As Gallus, during his residence in the Frankish territory, had made himself well acquainted with the German language, Columban permitted him to preach the gospel to a numerous multitude who had flocked together to witness the consecration. It is indeed a true saying of Luther's, "It is God's work alone to banish idols from the human heart; whatever comes from without, is a farce." If men are deprived of some of their idols, they will manufacture others. But when the preaching of divine grace opens a way to the heart, it will facilitate if the sensible impression to which idolatry cleaves be taken away. Thus Gallus confirmed the impression that his discourse made, by dashing in pieces the images before the eyes of the wild pagan multitude, and thus giving them ocular demonstration of the nothingness and weakness of their false gods.

At this place the monks occupied themselves with gardening and planting fruit-trees. Gallus wove nets and attended to fishing. His success was so great that he not only supplied the other monks with fish, but also entertained strangers, and often made presents to the people.*

* A similar account is given of Bishop Wilfred, who preached the gospel in Sussex towards the close of the seventh century. When he first came there, a famine prevailed: the sea and the rivers were full of fish; but the people only knew how to catch eels. He was obliged to instruct them in fishing. He collected all the nets; his people used them in the right manner, and caught three hundred fishes of different kinds. One hundred of these he kept for his own people, a hundred he gave to the owners of the net, and the remaining hundred to the poor. By this means he won the love of the people; and as they were so much indebted to him for their temporal welfare, they listened to him more willingly when he discoursed of heavenly things.

When they were expelled from this region, and the Abbot Columban was proceeding to Italy, Gallus was prevented from following him by illness—and this circumstance proved a great blessing to the people among whom they had been residing; for otherwise Gallus would have not been to them what he actually became. Gallus being thus left behind betook himself with his fishing-nets to a priest named Willimar, who lived in an old castle, and had already received him hospitably with the Abbot Columban, and had assigned them their residences. After he had been restored to health by this person's affectionate care, he wished to find out a place in the forest for building and cultivating. He therefore applied to the deacon Hillibald, whose business it was to supply his people with fish and birds, who hence frequently traversed the woods, and was well acquainted with the paths. In company with him he wished to find out a place suited for building and provided with good water. The deacon gave him a fearful description of the multitude of wild beasts in the forest, but Gallus answered him: "It is an expression of the apostle's, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' and again: 'All things work together for good to them that love God;' He who preserved Daniel in the lion's den, can deliver me from the power of the wild beasts." The deacon then said: "Put only some bread and a little net in your knapsack; to-morrow I will take you into the forest; that God who has brought you here to us from a distant land will also send his angel with us, as he once did with Tobias, and show us a place answering to your pious wishes." Gallus prepared himself for his journey by prayer; when they had travelled till two or three o'clock, Hillibald said: "Let us now take some bread and water, that we may be strengthened to pursue the rest of our way." Gallus answered: "My son, do what is necessary for your own strengthening; I am resolved to taste nothing till God has pointed out to me the desired place of rest." But the deacon answered: "No—we will share the discomfort together, and then the joy." They proceeded till towards evening, when they came to a stream full of fish, running down from a rock; they succeeded in catching a quantity of fish—the deacon made a fire, broiled the fish, and took bread out of their knapsack. Meanwhile Gallus had gone a little on one

side in order to pray, but being entangled in the bushes he fell down; the deacon hastened to help him up, but Gallus refused his aid, saying: "Let me alone; this is my resting-place for life; here will I dwell." He consecrated the place by prayer, and after he had risen up, he made a cross with a small twig, planted it in the earth, and hung on the cross some relics which he used to wear in a case about his neck. Here they both knelt down again to pray; and on this spot was founded the monastery, afterwards called by his name, St. Gall. Here Gallus laboured in the education of youth, in the training of ecclesiastics and monks, by whom the seeds of Christian knowledge were scattered still wider; he also dispensed many spiritual and temporal benefits among the people. When he received presents from wealthy individuals he assembled crowds of poor people in the district, and distributed among them what he had thus obtained. On one such occasion, one of his scholars said to him: "My father, I have a costly silver vessel, beautifully enchased; if you approve, I will reserve it, that it may be used at the Holy Supper." But Gallus answered: "My son, think of Peter's words, 'Gold and silver have I none:' and in order that you may not act contrary to so wholesome an example, hasten and dispose of it for the good of the poor; my teacher Columban used to distribute the Lord's body in a vessel of brass."

The vacant bishopric of Costnitz was offered to Gallus: but he preferred discharging the quiet duties of his convent, and therefore declined the office. He obtained the appointment for the deacon Johannes, a native of the country, who had studied the Scriptures under him. At the consecration of the bishop, a great multitude of persons came from all quarters; Gallus availed himself of the opportunity to impress on the hearts of those who had recently been converted to Christianity, the love of God as exhibited in creation and redemption, and to trace, in a connected manner, the leadings of God's providence for the salvation of mankind. He entered the pulpit with his late scholar Johannes, who interpreted to the people in German, a discourse which he delivered in Latin. Speaking of the creation he said: "God created beings endowed with reason, to praise him and to be happy from him, in him, and through him. You ought to know

this cause of your creation, my Christian brethren, in order that you may not regard yourselves as reprobate beings, and abdicate your dignity by living like brutes. God, who is the highest good, resolved to create beings endowed with reason, that acknowledging him as their Lord, the author of their existence, and being filled with his love, they should rejoice in being made happy in him." He then deduced the origin of evil from the desire of rational beings to have in themselves the ground of their being, life, and happiness; hence arises that internal emptiness, since the creature, turning away from the fountain of life and left to itself, must fall from fulness to emptiness, from reality to nothingness. He closed the whole address with the following exhortations: "We who are the unworthy messengers of the gospel to these times, adjure you in Christ's name that you renounce for ever the devil and all his works and ways, as you have already renounced them once at baptism; that you will acknowledge the one true God and Father who reigns for ever in heaven, and the eternal Wisdom who in time became man for us men, and the Holy Ghost, the pledge of eternal salvation granted to us in our sojourn here; and thus may you strive to live, as you have acknowledged it becomes the children of God. Be kind to one another and forgive one another as God hath forgiven you your sins. . . . . May God Almighty, who wills that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, and who, by the instrumentality of my tongue, has delivered this in your hearing, grant that by his grace you may bring forth fruit in your hearts."

4. *Boniface, the Apostle of the Germans.*

Boniface, or Winfred (his Anglo-Saxon name), who was born at Crediton, in Devonshire, in the year 680, deserves to be honoured as the father of the German church, though he was by no means the first who brought the seeds of the gospel into Germany. Many had already laboured in that field before him, but the efforts of scattered and isolated individuals were not sufficient to secure the continued propagation of Christianity. Settled ecclesiastical institutions required to be added, and this was first effected by Boniface, from whose agency the salvation of so many proceeded even down to the present time.

The first particular to be noticed in Boniface's history is, that the seeds of religion were early developed in his heart. As in England the custom had been kept up, which was introduced by the first pious Irish missionaries, for the clergy to visit the houses of the laity and to deliver discourses on religious subjects before their families, the children in such cases often listened attentively, and they gladly conversed with them on the things of religion. His father tried to repress his inclination for the ecclesiastical profession, as he had intended him for a post of secular distinction. But, as it often happens, the inclination which his father aimed to subdue only acquired greater force, and at last the impression of a severe illness induced his father to give up further opposition to his son's views. Boniface was educated in several noted English convents, where he became intimately acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, which were to be a light to his path in after-life among savage tribes. His mind was certainly narrowed during this period by many prejudices which kept him from the pure knowledge of Scripture doctrine, and which must necessarily have been a hindrance to him in his missionary labours; for the more pure and free, and unmixed with human schemes, Christianity is, the more easily it makes its way into the hearts of men, and the more easily can it preserve in undiminished vigour its divine attractive power over human nature. The missionary requires especially the spirit of Christian freedom, that he may not obstruct the work of God in the soul by human alloy, or prevent Christ, whose organ alone he ought to be, from obtaining in every nation that peculiar form which is exactly suitable to each one. This stand-point Boniface certainly did not occupy, and it was during this whole period unknown in the development of the church. The nations were obliged, first of all, to receive Christianity in the form of a definite, visible church, which had built many foreign materials on the one foundation, which is Christ, and to admit among them the great building of the Roman church, in order to develop themselves under its guardianship to the maturity of manhood in Christ, but at last were led by Luther from the guardianship of the church to Christ, whom alone to serve and on whom alone to depend is true freedom.

When Boniface had completed his five-and-thirtieth year,

he felt himself excited by the example of other missionaries among his countrymen to carry the message of the gospel to the heathen. What would have become of our fatherland if God had not by his Spirit awakened that missionary zeal, especially in England and Ireland! And as we now with joy look back with gratitude on the labours of those heroes of the faith, to whom we owe the blessings of Christianity and of all mental culture, so hereafter, the churches gathered from among the heathen in South India, Asia, and Africa, when they have received through Christianity the abundance of all earthly and heavenly good, will look back with gratitude on the commencing missionary zeal of the present day. An English priest, Egbert, gave the first impulse to this missionary movement. In a dangerous illness he made a vow, that if his life were spared he would devote it to the service of the Lord among foreign nations. After this, he decided with several of his associates to visit the German tribes; but when on the point of sailing he was prevented by several circumstances from accompanying them, though he must still be regarded as the prime mover in the undertaking.

Boniface himself informs us, that an impulse natural to his nation contributed, with the religious interest, to impel him to missionary labour—in other words, a passion for foreign travel and the fear of Christ, as he expresses it in one of his letters. He terms it the fear of Christ, since he regarded it as a debt due to the heathen, an obligation laid upon him by Christ, which he believed himself bound to fulfil: he would have exclaimed with the Apostle Paul, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel!" First of all, he assisted in his labours the zealous Willibrord, one of those missionaries who followed the impulse given by Egbert, and founded the church in East Friesland and the Netherlands. He wished to have retained Boniface near him that he might be his successor as archbishop of Utrecht; but he declined compliance, feeling impelled by an inward call to begin a fresh work among the heathen tribes of Germany. The subject of his waking thoughts presented itself to him in an admonitory dream, and great views of the future were opened to him, as a female friend (the Abbess Bugga) in England reminded him at a later period, that God had

revealed himself to him in a dream, and had promised him an abundant harvest among the heathen. The value he set on the Holy Scriptures is shown in the following words, addressed to a young man in his native land, whom he exhorted to a diligent study of the Bible: "Throw aside everything that hinders you, and direct your whole study to the Holy Scripture, and there seek that divine wisdom which is more precious than gold; for what is it more seemly in youth to strive after, or what can age possess more valuable, than the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, which will guide our souls, without danger of being shipwrecked in the storm, to the shores of the heavenly Paradise, to the eternal heavenly joys of angels?" To an abbess who had sent him a Bible, he wrote in return, "that she had consoled him when banished to Germany, with spiritual light; for whoever is obliged to visit the dark corners of the German people falls into the jaws of death, unless he has the Word of God as a lamp to his feet and a light to his path." He requested his old friend, Daniel, bishop of Winchester, to send him a manuscript of the Prophets left behind by his deceased abbot and teacher, Wimbert, which was written in very plain and distinct characters. "If God incline you to grant this request," he wrote to him, "you can render no greater comfort to my old age; for in this country I cannot obtain such a manuscript of the Prophets as I wish for, and with my already weak eyesight I cannot distinguish small and closely-written characters."

In the following passage of a letter to an English abbess, he shows what was the ground of his confidence in all his labours and conflicts. "Pray for me, that He who dwelleth on high and looketh on the lowly (Psa. cxiii. 5) would forgive my sins, that the word may be given me with freedom of utterance, and that the gospel of the glory of Christ may run and be glorified among the heathen." In his twenty-second letter to some English nuns, he says: "I entreat, as I have confidence in you that you always do so, that you pray fervently to the Lord that we may be redeemed from wicked and mischievous men—for all have not faith; and be assured that we praise God, although the sufferings of our heart are many. May the Lord our God, who is the refuge of the poor and the hope of the humble, deliver us from our trouble

and from the temptations of this evil world, that the glorious gospel of Christ may be glorified, that the grace of the Lord shown to me may not be in vain; and since I am the last and most unworthy of all the messengers which the Romish church has sent out for the publication of the gospel, may I not die without having brought forth fruit for the gospel; may I not depart without leaving sons and daughters behind; so that when the Lord comes I may not be found guilty of having hidden my talent, and that I may not, by the guilt of my sins, instead of the reward of labour, receive punishment for unfruitful labour from Him who sent me." Thus he endeavoured—as became a humble labourer in the Lord's vineyard, who knew how to distinguish what was divine in the cause from the defects of its human instrumentality—to find the reason of the hindrances to his success in his own sinfulness and deficiencies. In a letter addressed to the English clergy, he says: "Seek to obtain by your prayers that our God and Lord Jesus Christ, who will have all men saved and attain to the knowledge of God, may convert the hearts of the pagan Saxons to the faith, that they may be delivered from the snares of the devil in which they are entangled, and become associated with the children of the mother-church. Have pity upon them, for they were used themselves to say, 'We are of the same flesh and bone [with the Anglo-Saxons].'" To an English abbot, he writes: "We beseech you earnestly that you would support us by your prayers—us, who labour and scatter the seed of the gospel among the rude and ignorant tribes of Germany: now neither is he that planteth nor he that watereth anything, but God who giveth the increase." In a letter to an English bishop, he says: "I need your prayers, since the sea of Germany is so dangerous to sail over, that I may by your prayers and under God's guidance arrive at the haven of eternal rest without stain or damage to my soul; that I may not, while I am trying to bring the light of evangelical truth to the blind who know not their own darkness and do not wish to see—that I may not be covered by the darkness of my own sins—that I may not run or have run in vain—that I may be supported by your prayers, and may attain undefiled and enlightened to the light of eternity." And again: "Pray the living Protector of our life, the only Refuge

of sufferers, the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, that he would preserve us uninjured by his protective power, that the gracious Father would put into our hands an enlightening torch, and that he would illuminate the hearts of the heathen to contemplate the glorious gospel of Christ."

Boniface availed himself of the aids of the secular power in order to protect his churches and convents from the devastation of the rude pagans; to secure the lives of the monks and nuns whom he had sent for, from his native land, to instruct the pagans, and to educate the converts; to procure the necessary means of subsistence; and where Christianity had found an entrance, to remove out of the way the ancient objects of pagan idolatry, which always revived the attachment of the rude people to it. What effect Boniface could produce upon uninstructed men by external impressions, is shown by a singular incident. When he was preaching the gospel in Hesse (at Geismar, in the department of Gudenberg), a sacred oak of immense size, and dedicated to Thor, the god of thunder, filled the minds of the people with the greatest awe, and powerfully counteracted the impression of his sermons. The people could not divest themselves of their belief in the divine power of this oak; and hence, though the discourses of Boniface might take a momentary effect upon them, they quickly relapsed into paganism. Boniface, by the advice of some Hessian Christians, went with a few of his associates to the oak. He himself began to hew down the oak with an axe, while a crowd of infuriated pagans stood around. When they saw the oak fall asunder in four parts, and that their god could take no vengeance on Boniface, their delusion was at once broken up. In order to perpetuate the impression of this event, Boniface made use of the timber of this tree in building a chapel.

It was always a principal object with Boniface to operate on the minds of the young by religious instruction and a Christian education. His zealous anxiety for the educational institutions connected with the convents (not to mention other proofs), amply refuted the reproach cast upon him that he had effected the outward conversion of the people in a compulsory manner, merely by the secular power, though he did not refuse it as an auxiliary in carrying out his plans.

His paternal care for the instruction and training of the

new converts is expressed very beautifully in the letter in which he urges on the Frank court-chaplain, Fulrad, to appoint a zealous and able man, after his death, to be at the head of the whole work, when he was on the point of leaving the world, after a service of twenty years. "I entreat our sovereign (Pepin), in the name of Christ the Son of God, that he would intimate during my lifetime what reward he will give to my scholars after my decease. For there are some priests appointed in many places for the service of the church and the parishes who are almost entire strangers. There are some monks who have been placed in our cells, in order to teach the children to read. There are some aged men who have lived with me a long time, and assisted me in my labours. For all these persons, I am anxious that after my death they may not be scattered as sheep without a shepherd, and that the people who are in the immediate vicinity of the pagans may not lose their Christianity. My clergy, who live near the pagans, have a wretched maintenance. They can, indeed, obtain daily bread; but as to clothes, they would be quite destitute, unless they obtained aid from other quarters, with which I have supported them, that they might continue in those places for the benefit of the people."

When he first entered on his field of labour, his friend Daniel, bishop of Winchester, gave him instructions which contained many useful hints. "He was especially to show the rude pagans that he was accurately acquainted with their religious doctrines; by asking questions, he was to find out what was irrational or contradictory in their belief, in such a manner as not to insult or irritate them, but act on all occasions with gentleness and moderation; he ought to institute frequently a comparison between their doctrine and the Christian, yet not too pointedly, that the pagans might not be exasperated, but rather ashamed of their absurd opinions."

The following is a specimen of his method of preaching: "Behold, my beloved brethren, what kind of message we bring you; not the message of one from obedience to whom you can be redeemed by money [as among the Germanic tribes it was common for persons to redeem themselves from punishment, or to make reparation by the payment of a fine,

which paved the way for the infamous practice of indulgences], but a message from Him to whom you are indebted for shedding his blood for you. We exhort you, live in regular wedlock; let no one pollute himself with an illicit connection. Let no one who has so polluted himself approach to the body of the Lord before he has truly repented, that it be not for his condemnation, but for his salvation. My dear brethren, we are altogether impure men, and yet we would not come in contact with one outwardly defiled. And do we believe that the only-begotten Son of God has willingly taken on his body the pollution of our sins? Behold, my brethren, our King, who has thought us worthy of this message, comes directly to us. Let us prepare a pure dwelling for him within us, if we wish that he should dwell in our body. We beseech you, dear sons, that you who are wont to fear the laws of the world, would willingly hearken to the law of our God. He it is who by the instrumentality of our tongue speaks to you, whose Easter blessing you have recently celebrated, who did not spare his only-begottten Son from the hands of his persecutors, in order to grant us the heritage of his children. If you perceive what great grace has been shown us by his sufferings, you will so much the more quickly obey his commands, in order that we may not, by our disobeying, be guilty of ingratitude for his benefits towards us."

He then refutes the objection which, among various heathen nations, had often been made to the publication of the gospel, "How could God, if Christianity be the only saving religion, have left men without it for thousands of years?" Missionaries themselves who entertained confused and ill-digested opinions, had contributed to call forth such objections when they asserted more than they were justified in doing by the doctrine of Holy Scripture, when they applied what it declares only respecting those who obstinately reject the gospel, to all unbelievers, even those who could not believe, because the gospel was not published to them (Rom. x. 14). But the example of Cornelius, and what the Apostle Peter says in reference to it, justifies us in deducing the general law,—that those who without knowing anything of Christ, follow the leadings of that God "in whom we live, and move,

and have our being," like Cornelius, will be led—if not in this world, yet in a future state of existence—to the knowledge of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life.

Without entering further into the answer to that objection, Boniface attacks that pernicious mode of thinking which seeks excuses for unbelief and sin; which gives birth to such doubts in the minds of many: he calls them back to their want, which is the one thing needful. "Are there some among you," he says, "(O that they were few,) who complain respecting our negligence, because we are come to you so late with the message of salvation. Their pain might be just, if they were now willing to receive the means of salvation; but how can he complain of the delay of the physician, who, when he comes, though late, is not willing to be healed? Yes; the longer the disease has preceded, so much greater must be the subsequent humility. For who can endure the pride of the sick, who complains sorely of his disease, and yet will not accept the means of curing it? How many, my dear sons, do we find, who live in their sins, yet murmur because Christ came so late; because he allowed so many thousands to perish before his incarnation! If we admit the complaints of such people, then we must remain sick, even after the bestowment of such a physician. Why, O man, dost thou complain of the Sun of Righteousness for rising so late, when even after its rising thou choosest to walk in darkness? Because the clouds have long overcast the sky, shall we not rejoice at the return of brighter weather?"

He frequently requested his friends in England to send him their comments upon various portions of the Bible, which he made use of in his sermons; as, for example, a useful compendium for preachers, of Bede's expository remarks on the texts for Sundays and festivals. In order to rightly impress sense-bound men with reverence for the Holy Scriptures, he caused a copy of a part of the Scriptures which he wished to use in his sermons to be written in gilt letters. He chose for this purpose the Epistles of the Apostle Peter, since in virtue of the relation in which he stood to the pope, he regarded himself as the messenger of this apostle: "He wished," he said, "to have constantly before his eyes the words of him who had led him into this path."

In such language, which although mixed with error was sincere, we see how far his reverence for the papacy was from views of secular policy. His anxiety for the spread of religious knowledge among the people is apparent, also, from his repeated regulations respecting it, that every layman should know in German the Creed, the Paternoster, and the form of renunciation at baptism.

How deeply Boniface felt the greatness and responsibility of his calling as archbishop of the German church, is shown in his letter to an English archbishop. "The apostle [Paul] calls the priest an overseer [bishop]; the prophet [Ezekiel] calls him a watchman; and the Saviour calls him a shepherd of the church; and all confirm the truth, that the teacher who is silent respecting the sins of the people, incurs by his silence the guilt of the blood of souls. Hence a great, a fearful necessity, is forced upon us, that according to the apostle's words, we should be patterns to believers; that is, every teacher must live so piously as not to rob his words of their power by inconsistent conduct; and while he lives watchful over himself, he must also not lay himself open to condemnation for silence respecting the sins of others. 'Hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.' (Ezek. iii. 17, 18.)" He shows by this language that the priest ought to say what he has learnt from the study of the Divine Word, what God had imparted to him, not what human thought had discovered. "Thou art to proclaim for my sake, not thy words, but mine; thou hast no ground for self-exaltation. 'When I say to the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand.'" Let us not, then, have such stony hearts as not to be alarmed at these words of the Lord. All that God would have us observe, he has so clearly set forth and confirmed by the sanction of his name, that we—shocking as it is to say so—may more easily despise his word than falsely say that we do not understand divine things that are so plainly represented to us. Have we not heard it, 'Thus saith the Lord?' Who, then, but the man who does not believe God, can doubt that what God has said will come to pass? Since, then, these things are so, let our weary

souls take refuge in Him of whom Solomon says, 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thy own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.' And in another passage it is said: 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth to it, and are safe.' Let us, then, stand fast in righteousness, and arm our souls against temptation, and bear what the Lord gives us to bear, while we say to him, 'Lord, thou art our refuge for ever and ever.' (Psa. xc. 1.) Let us trust in him who has laid the burden upon us. What we cannot bear by our own strength, let us bear through him who is Almighty, and who says, 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'"

Devoted as Boniface was to the pope, he was by no means afraid to speak the truth candidly to the pope, when the interests of the newly-planted church required it. A remnant of the ancient pagan superstitious usages and excesses on New-year's day was still retained at Rome. Amulets were worn by the women, and offered for sale. As people belonging to the new churches frequently visited Rome, they believed that such abuses, which fell under the eyes of the pope, received his sanction, and consequently murmured at Boniface, who so zealously tried to suppress all heathenish superstitions and usages. Boniface made strong representations to Pope Zacharias on this subject. "Men devoted to the senses," he wrote to him, "ignorant Germans, Bavarians, or Franks, think if they see any of those evil practices which we forbid indulged in at Rome, that they are sanctioned by the priests; they then reproach us and are offended, and thus our preaching and instruction are hindered."

Boniface showed also this Christian candour, combined with wise consideration and forbearance, in his conduct towards King Ethelbald of Mercia. In the midst of his labours abroad, he still felt a lively interest in the affairs of his native land, and was grieved to hear of the licentious life of this prince. He resolved to write a remonstrance to him. He began his epistle with commending the good qualities of the king: "I have heard that you distribute many alms, and am glad on your account, for he who gives alms to the least of his needy brethren, will receive a gracious sentence from the Lord at the day of judgment: 'Verily I

say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' I have also heard that you have strictly forbidden theft, robbery, and perjury, that you show yourself to be the protector of the widows and the poor, and maintain firm peace in your kingdom. On this account also I bless God; for he who is truth and peace itself, our Lord Christ, says, 'Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.'" He then proceeds to mention the report of the king's unchaste life, and says: "I adjure you by Christ the Son of God, by his second advent and his kingdom, that if this is true, to amend your life by repentance, and reflect how unseemly it is that you should change the image of God, in which you are created, into the image of the devil; and that you who have been made a ruler over multitudes, not by your own merit but by the grace of God, should yourself, through lust, become the slave of the Evil Spirit; for, as the Lord says, 'He that doeth sin, is the servant of sin.'" He then adduces to the shame of nominal Christians, the example of the German Saxons, who even before their conversion to Christianity, were distinguished for their chastity. "Therefore the heathen who know not God, and have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law; these show the work of law written in their hearts." "It is time," he says, "that you save the multitudes who are rushing to destruction, who, if they follow the example of their sinful chiefs, will sink into the gulf of perdition; for we are all either attracted by good example to the life of our heavenly fatherland, or are seduced to destruction by evil example, and we shall all without doubt receive punishment or reward from the eternal Judge." He then declares to the king that if the sanctity of matrimony is not preserved intact among a people, the youthful generation will degenerate and sink deeper into corruption, like the people of Spain, who at last came under the power of the Saracens. In order to prepare the king for this letter, he sent him a shorter letter by another messenger, in which he said nothing of the contents of this, and which he accompanied with presents,*

* To accompany letters with presents was common in that age. The presents were simple, according to the character of the time. Pope

which in that age were considered suitable for a king; namely, two falcons, two shields, and two lances. "Although these are not worthy presents," he said, "yet accept them as signs of love. And finally, may we all alike hear the words, 'Fear God and keep his commandments.' And when you have received a letter (the one already mentioned) by another messenger, I pray that you will carefully weigh its contents." That first letter, however, did not come directly into the king's hands, but Boniface sent it to a presbyter, Herefried, to read it to the king. "For we have heard," he writes to Herefried, "that by the fear of God you are freed from the fear of man, and that on several occasions this prince has thought proper to listen in some degree to your exhortations. And you must know that we have addressed these words of exhortation to the prince, from no other motive than from pure love, and because having been born and educated among the English, I rejoice in the welfare of my countrymen, and in the praise bestowed upon them; but I am troubled for their sins, and the consequent reproach that they suffer." Thus Boniface connected the utmost Christian prudence with the pious zeal that wields the sword of the Spirit.

If in a man whom God has employed as an instrument in order to found his kingdom among an important portion of mankind, we are bound to recognize the work of the divine Spirit, and to take care lest, on account of the disturbing mixtures of the flesh, we fail to recognize the work of the Spirit, which shows itself in its fruits; still, on the other hand, we ought not to leave these disturbing ingredients unmarked and concealed. We must guard—as first of all in self-examination, so also in the judgment we form of others—against confounding what proceeds from the spirit with what proceeds from the flesh.

What impaired the efficiency of Boniface was, that the freedom of the children of God, in its whole extent, was not known to him,—the freedom of those who are dead with Christ to the elements of the world, whose life no

Zacharias sent Boniface a woollen cloth for washing the feet (one of the presents which he frequently made in allusion to the washing the feet of others as a sign of humility) and some silver; to an English archbishop two flasks of wine; to a person holding an office in the Romish church a silver cup and a linen cloth.

more belongs to this world, but is hid with Christ in God, belonging to heaven, and therefore can be no longer entangled with the ordinances of this world. He knew, indeed, the ground of inward Christianity, and possessed it in his inner life; here he had more than he could express in words, since his knowledge (intellectually considered) was not developed in proportion to his life of faith. But along with this internal Christianity, he connected a certain attachment to external things, which was foreign to it. He built on the right foundation, which is Christ, and therefore his work as being divine, would stand and develop itself through divine power in succeeding ages, and would be purified in the fire; but on this foundation he had built not pure gold alone, but also wood, hay and stubble. Yet it must be said, in his behalf, that he was not the author of this mixture of heterogeneous materials, but it belonged to his age. The fire kindled by the Lord at the Reformation was requisite to consume the wood, hay and stubble, so that the foundation might shine forth with its genuine lustre.

The language in which Paul addresses the Galatians, was applicable in a certain sense to the whole church at this period. "Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" But we also recognize in this development of the church, the guiding wisdom of its invisible Ruler, who permitted it to happen, that rude humanity should be again placed under the law as a schoolmaster, that it might be trained to the righteousness of faith, to the gospel of the spirit, as this was about to appear at the Reformation in all its clearness, in contrariety to that confused mixture of the law and gospel. Underneath that shell of ordinances relating to outward things, the kernel of the gospel was still preserved, and it needed only the shell to be broken for the kernel to be exhibited in all its purity. And from the time that mixture of law and gospel spread in the church, and the things of the spirit were involved in outward ordinances, the spirit of the gospel always aroused individual witnesses to whom the things of the spirit were revealed in their purity, and who felt themselves compelled to combat that bondage to the rudiments of this world. They were the lights that appeared

in a dark place, till the day dawned and the morning star arose on the church of God. To this class an opponent of Boniface appears to belong—Clement, from Ireland. The British and Irish missionaries certainly surpassed Boniface in freedom of spirit and purity of Christian knowledge. We have a beautiful specimen of the Christian freedom of spirit which animated the ancient British Church, in the answer of an abbot of the British convent of Bangor when called upon by Augustin to submit to the Romish Church. "Be it known to you of a surety that we are all obedient and subject to the church of God, to the pope of Rome, and to every pious Christian, in the sense that we love every one in his place, and are ready to help him in word and deed. But of any other obedience which we owe to him whom you call pope, or father of fathers, I know nothing. But the obedience I have mentioned we are ready to render to him and every Christian to all eternity." Thus Clement brought from his native country a purer Christian knowledge, free from the human ordinances of the Romish Church. He wished in matters of faith to bow only to the authority of Holy Writ; he disputed the authority of the church laws and of the distinguished fathers of the Western Church, to whose *dicta* a decisive force was then attributed. Clement maintained, agreeably to the doctrine of the New Testament, that a bishop, without violating the dignity of his office, might live in matrimony. Clement therefore was probably superior to Boniface in Christian knowledge. And how much might he have effected if he had connected the spirit of love and of wisdom with this clearness of mental vision, if he had built up the German Church on the foundation that the Holy Scriptures explained from their own contents, are the fountain of Christian knowledge! What fruits must Christianity have borne when understood in its purity! Yet it may be questioned whether Clement was as capable as Boniface of dealing with uncultivated men; whether he knew how to distinguish properly between the milk and the strong meat, to separate the practically important from the unimportant, and to make allowance for the limited capacity of men in a rude state. If Providence intended to lead rude humanity to the gospel through the preparatory discipline of the law, it is not diffi-

cult to understand why it chose a Boniface and not a Clement as the instrument for the formation of the German church.

Near this Clement stands Adalbert the Frank, who in knowledge and reflection was not to be compared to Clement. He was a forerunner of those mystical sects who opposed a certain internal religion of the heart to ceremonial service and human ordinances; but since they followed only their subjective feelings and their imagination, since Holy Writ did not stand by their side as a monitor to watchfulness over themselves, as a warning voice against the angels of darkness who clothe themselves as angels of light, as a waymark for the trial of the spirits, or because they wished to place themselves as masters above the Scriptures, instead of humbly following, hence fell into many dangerous self-deceptions of enthusiasm and often opposed the errors which they combated by errors of another kind. A sincere piety is expressed in this prayer of Adalbert's: "Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, thou who art the Alpha and the Omega (the beginning and the end of all existence), who art throned above cherubim and seraphim, supreme love, essence of all bliss, Father of the holy angels, thou who createst heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein, on thee I call, to thee I cry, I invite thee to my miserable self; for thou hast graciously promised, 'Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, that will I do.' Therefore now I desire thyself, for my soul confides in thee." He spoke also against the over-valuation of pilgrimages to Rome. But in other parts of the above prayer are found the names of various angels, which, besides other particulars, lead us to believe that Adalbert indulged in many enthusiastic notions, which if propagated among a rude people would be very injurious, especially when he was the object of an excessive veneration, though perhaps not desired by himself.

Though on many points the mind of Boniface was cramped by the regulations of the Romish Church, yet at times the spirit of Christianity which animated him appears to have carried him above these limits. Thus he could not be satisfied when he heard that according to ecclesiastical law, the so-called spiritual relationship presumed to exist between sponsors was a bar to marriage between the parties; for how

in this one case could the spiritual relationship be so great an obstacle to corporeal union, since by baptism all become sons and daughters of Christ, brothers and sisters of each other? *

But Boniface, at the advanced age of seventy years, was not willing to pass his last days in self-indulgent repose. When he could with confidence leave his follower Lull to carry on the work in Germany, Christian love impelled him to go where there was a deficiency of labourers, where severe conflicts for the gospel were still to be waged. The intention of labouring for the conversion of the inhabitants of Friesland, for whom nothing had been done since the labours carried on for fifty years by the zealous Willibrod, and the greater part of whom were still pagans; this intention had never left him, and now when there was nothing more for him to do in Germany, was revived with fresh vigour. He took leave of his follower Lull, saying: "I cannot do otherwise; I must go whither the impulse of my heart leads me, for the time of my departure is at hand; soon shall I be freed from this body and obtain a crown of eternal glory. But you, my dearest son, carry on to perfection the founding of the churches, which I began in Thuringia; earnestly recall the people from erroneous doctrines; complete the building of the church in Fulda (the favourite establishment of Boniface), and may that be the resting-place of my body, bowed down with years." He commissioned Lull to get ready everything necessary for his journey, especially to lay a cloth in his book-chest (he always carried with him spiritual books, out of which he either read or sung as he was travelling), in which his body was to be wrapped when brought to Fulda.

He summoned up the remaining powers of his old age,

* In a similar manner Luther, the second apostle of the Germans, was brought to recognize the futility of these regulations of the Canon Law. In a letter of the year 1523 (De Wette's edition, vol. ii. p. 351), he says, "And it is to be considered that it is a very great thing that we all have one and the same baptism, the sacrament, God, and the Spirit, by which we all become spiritually brothers and sisters. Now this spiritual brotherhood does not prevent my taking a damsel to wife who has had the same baptism with thyself; why should it hinder that I have stood godfather to her, which is much less? The Evil Spirit has invented such regulations, to damage God's free rule."

which were invigorated by the inspiration of faith, travelled through Friesland in his seventieth year with youthful vigour, preached, converted, and baptized thousands; destroyed idolatrous temples, and founded churches. The persons baptized had dispersed and were all to assemble again on a certain day, in order to receive confirmation. In the meantime Boniface and his companions had pitched their tents on the banks of the Burda, not far from Dockingen, on the borders of East and West Friesland. When the morning of the appointed day dawned, Boniface waited with anxiety for the arrival of his new converts. He heard the sound of an approaching multitude; but it was an armed host of infuriated Pagans, who had sworn to murder on that day the enemy of their gods. The Christian youths in the retinue of Boniface wished to defend, and were on the point of beginning the conflict; but as soon as he heard the tumult, he went out, accompanied by his clergy, with the relics which he had with him, and said to the young men: "Cease fighting, for the Holy Scriptures teach us not to return evil with evil, but with good. I have for a long time earnestly desired this day, and the time of my departure is now come. Be strong in the Lord and bear with thankful resignation whatever his grace sends. Hope in Him and he will save your souls." To the clergy he said: "My brethren, be of good courage, and be not afraid of those who can kill the body, but cannot kill the soul that is destined for eternal life. Rejoice in the Lord, and cast the anchor of your hope on him who will give you immediately the reward of eternal happiness; endure steadfastly the brief moment of death, that you may reign for ever with Christ." Thus he died a martyr on the 5th of June, 755.

5. *Gregory, Abbot of Utrecht.*

Boniface took a peculiar interest in the young, and, in this instance, sowed the seed which after his death brought forth abundant fruit. He left behind him those who having been educated and trained by him, continued to labour in different spheres, in the same spirit. Among these, his scholars, the Abbot Gregory distinguished himself. The manner in which Boniface first became connected with him,

shows in a remarkable manner with what power he could operate on youthful minds.

When Boniface left his first field of labour in Friesland, and was travelling to Hesse, he came to a nunnery, situate on the Moselle, in the territory of Triers, where he was hospitably received by the Abbess Addula. It was a custom of the times to read a portion of the Scriptures during meals. For this office the abbess chose her grandson, a lad of fifteen years old, just returned from school. After Boniface had pronounced the blessing, the youth read out of the Latin Bible. Boniface thought he observed marks of intelligence in his countenance, and when he had finished, said: "You read well, my son, but do you understand what you read?" The youth, who did not catch Boniface's meaning, said that certainly he well understood what he had been reading. "Then tell me," said Boniface, "how you understand it." The youth began to read it over again. Boniface then said: "No, my son, that is not what I mean: I know very well that you can read it; but you must give me in your mother-tongue what you have read." The youth acknowledged that he was not able. "Shall I then tell you what it is?" said Boniface; and when the youth requested him to do so, Boniface let him read once more the whole distinctly, and then he himself translated it into German, and preached upon it before the whole company. And as Lindger, a scholar of the Abbot Gregory, who is the narrator of this incident, tells us, "it was evident from what source these words came; for they pressed with such power and rapidity on Gregory's mind, that at a single exhortation of this teacher, hitherto unknown to him, he forgot parents and native land, and at once went up to his grandmother and said, that he wished to go with this man and learn from him to understand the Holy Scriptures." The abbess tried to keep him back, and represented to him that this person was an entire stranger to him, and that he knew not whither he was going. But "many waters cannot quench love." (Cantic. viii.) Gregory was firm to his resolution, and said to his grandmother: "If you will not give me a horse to ride with him, I will follow him on foot." When his grandmother saw that something heavenly touched the youth's heart, she gave him a horse and servant, and allowed him to go with

Boniface. Lindger says, respecting it: "It appears to me that at that time the same Spirit was working in this young man which inflamed the apostles, when, at the word of the Lord, they forsook their nets and their father, and followed their Redeemer. This was the work of the Supreme Artificer, that same Divine Spirit who works all in all, imparting to every one as he will."

Gregory from that time followed Boniface wherever he went, amidst all his dangers and toils, as a most faithful scholar. He travelled with him at a later period to Rome, and brought back Bibles with him, which he used in the instruction of youth. He also accompanied him on his last journey to Friesland, and after his teacher's martyrdom laboured much for the spread of Christianity and Christian education in Friesland, as abbot of a monastery at Utrecht. He took great pains especially in preparing missionaries and teachers. Young men from France, England, Friesland, Saxony, Suabia, and Bavaria were here united by the bond of holy love, and formed into a nursery for the kingdom of God; and from this spot preachers of the gospel went forth in various directions, among tribes that were still pagan, and such as were newly converted to Christianity. Early in the morning he sat in his cell with paternal anxiety, and expected each one of his scholars would come to him, to whom he would address out of the Word of God what was exactly suited to the wants and peculiar disposition of each individual. Frequently in his sermons he impressed on his scholars that the new man could make no progress unless the old man was continually dying; and with this reference he often quoted the words of the Prophet Jeremiah: "I have set thee to root out and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant;" and connected with it, as an encouragement to the conflict, the promise: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love him."

In his seventieth year, three years before his death, Gregory had a stroke of palsy on the left side; but he retained his cheerfulness, went about among his scholars, or was carried by them; he continued to expound the Holy Scriptures, and to preach to them or to distribute

among them works for their particular study. In the last year of his life his lameness had so increased that he was obliged, like John the Apostle in his old age, to be carried, whither he wished, by his scholars. At last he was confined to his bed, where the Holy Scriptures were read, or the Psalms were sung to him. He retained his consciousness to the last. His scholars stood round his bed, and comforted one another with repeating the words, "He will not die to-day." But he summoned up his remaining strength, and said: "To-day you must grant my discharge." He was carried by his scholars into the church before the altar, prayed there, took the Holy Supper, and anxiously fixing his looks on the altar, breathed his last.

6. *The Abbot Sturm, of Fulda.*

Next to the Abbot Gregory, one of the most able scholars of Boniface was Sturm, descended from a respectable Bavarian family, who was committed to Boniface when a boy by his parents for education. After having assisted him for three years in preaching, he was seized with the desire to found a monastery somewhere in one of those wilds which then covered Germany, and which were reclaimed only by the transforming power of Christianity. As Boniface regarded monastic institutions as the principal means of improvement, both for the people and the land, he was well pleased with this proposal. He joined with him two others as companions, and after praying for them and giving them his blessing, said: "Go into Buchwald; may God enable his servants to prepare a settled habitation in the wilderness." They wandered for two days through the forest, and saw nothing but the earth and sky and immense trees. On the third day they came to a place which seemed suitable for cultivation, then called Hersfeld or Heroldesfeld, and now Herschfeld. After calling on Christ to give them his blessing, and that this place might be an abode for them, they built small huts, covered with the bark of trees, and remained there for some time. Sturm returned to his beloved master, for the purpose of giving an exact report to him (a man who considered everything carefully, and was not content with what might suffice for the present moment) respecting the situation of

the place, the quality of the soil, and the springs. Boniface did not at once give his opinion, but let him first of all rest, and revived him by spiritual conversation. He then told him plainly that the spot they had chosen was too much exposed to the incursions of the wild Saxons. Sturm and his companions sought a long time, but could find no place corresponding to the wishes of their bishop. At last Sturm set out alone. He rode on an ass through the wildest parts, singing psalms and lifting his heart to heaven, or praying with sighs to God. He rested wherever he happened to be at night-fall. The earth was his bed. With a sword which he carried with him he cut down branches of trees, and formed with them a fence round his ass to protect it from the wild beasts, of which there were great numbers in the forest. But after calling on the Lord, and marking his forehead with the sign of the cross, to testify that he resigned himself entirely to him, he lay down with composure. On one occasion a troop of wild Sclavonians, who had been bathing in the Fulda, met him, naked as they were; they presented a fearful appearance, and received him with an insulting outcry. Their interpreter asked him whither he was going; he answered quietly: "Further into the forest;" and the hand of God watched over him. The Sclavonians allowed him to proceed unmolested. At last he reached the object of his toilsome and dangerous pilgrimage, and found a place with which Boniface was perfectly satisfied. Here, then, in the year 744, the foundation of the monastery of Fulda was laid, from which the cultivation of this wilderness commenced, and in which the most distinguished teachers of the German church in following ages were trained.

Charlemagne employed Sturm particularly in publishing the gospel among the wild Saxons, who, though often vanquished, always rebelled against the rule of the Franks and against the Christian church, which had been forced upon them, and therefore rendered hateful. Preachers of the gospel coming in the train of an armed host could not indeed find an easy entrance to the hearts of men. Sturm excited the fury of the pagans against him, and the monastery was often the object of their desolating attacks.

On the day before his death he called all his people around him, and said to them: "You know what has been my

earnest aim; how I have laboured up to this day for your advantage and peace, and have been especially anxious that this monastery, after my death, might abide faithful to the will of Christ, and that you might here serve the Lord sincerely in love. Now abide all the days of your life in the course of conduct you have commenced. Pray for me to the Most High; and forgive me if I have done anything wrong, or have injured any one by injustice. I forgive with all my heart all who have injured me, even Lull, who was my constant enemy." (The Archbishop Lull, of Mentz, who had been engaged in many warm disputes with the Abbot Sturm, and had not acted towards him in the spirit of Christian love, though perhaps on both sides there was a mixture of right and wrong.)

On the following day, when the signs of approaching death showed themselves, the monks requested him to be their intercessor with the Lord, to whom he was now going. He answered: "Show yourselves worthy, and let your general conduct be such that I can with propriety pray for you; then I will do what you desire."

7. *Alcuin, on Missionary Efficiency.*

The failure at first of the mission among the Saxons may serve as a lesson and a warning for every following age. The grand error consisted in attempting to effect an alteration from without which can only proceed from within: in connecting a worldly object with the introduction of Christianity, and in not following the example of the Apostle Paul, who in publishing the gospel allowed the Jews to remain Jews, and the Greeks to remain Greeks, who knew how to be a Jew to the Jews, and a Greek to the Greeks. On these defects and errors the pious and wise Abbot Alcuin addressed some excellent remarks to the Emperor Charlemagne. He thus writes to him: "Seek out preachers for the people of sound morals, well instructed in the doctrines of the Christian faith, and carry on the publication of the Divine Word according to the example of the apostles, who were accustomed to supply their hearers at first with the 'milk of the word.' (1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.)" The teacher of the world meant to show, according to the inspiration of Christ speaking in him, that the yet

tender faith of new converts must be nourished with gentle commands, as children with milk; that their disposition, still weak, must not be alarmed by the more rigid precepts which would lead them to reject what they already received." Alcuin perceived, in the manner in which Christ formed these apostles, and trained them for their calling, and the account he gives of it, the model which ought to be followed, in all ages, for educating and training either nations or individuals. He appealed to Christ's words, who, when he was asked why his disciples did not fast, replied: "No man putteth new wine into old bottles, else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred." "You might hence," he added, "be led to consider whether it was well done to impose on a rude people at their first conversion the yoke of tithes (the church dues, so hateful to the free Saxons), if, indeed, the apostles who were instructed and sent out to preach, by the Lord himself, required tithes, or anywhere prescribed that they should be required." "Also due care must be taken to administer the office of preaching and baptism in a right manner, that the outward baptism of the body may not be useless, which it will be, unless preceded by a knowledge of the faith in souls endowed with reason. The Lord himself commanded (Matt. xxviii. 19) first of all to teach the faith, and then to baptize. At suitable times the doctrines of the gospel must be often repeated, until man is brought to perfect manhood, until he becomes a worthy habitation of the Holy Spirit, and a perfect child of God in works of mercy, as our heavenly Father is perfect." To the same effect he wrote to Arno, bishop of Salzburg, to whom the Emperor Charles had committed the conversion of the Avari. "Of what use is baptism without faith, since the apostle says: 'Without faith it is impossible to please God?' For this reason the unfortunate people of Saxony have so often abused the sacrament of baptism, because they have never had the principle of faith in their hearts. This also we must be aware of, that faith, as the holy Augustin says, is a matter of free-will, and not of compulsion. How can a man be forced to believe what he does not believe? A man may indeed be forced to baptism, but not to faith. Man being endowed with reason, must therefore be instructed and taught by repeated preaching, that he may

know the truths of the gospel. And especially we must implore for him the grace of God; for the tongue of the teacher is powerless, unless Divine grace penetrates the hearts of the hearers, as He who is the truth himself says: 'No man can come unto me unless the Father, who hath sent me, draw him;' and in another passage, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me;' and of the Holy Spirit he says: 'Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' For what the priest performs in a visible manner by water-baptism on the body, that the Holy Spirit performs in an invisible manner by faith in the soul. In baptism there are three visible and three invisible things. The visible are, the priest, the body, and the water; but the invisible, the Spirit, the soul, and faith. The three visible things profit nothing but what is done outwardly, if these three invisible things do not operate internally. The priest washes the body with water, the Holy Spirit justifies the soul by faith." After expressing similar sentiments to those in the letters before quoted, and quoting the words of Christ, he adds: "Who are the old bottles, if not those who are hardened in the delusions of heathenism? If on such persons, when the gospel is first announced, we impose the stricter precepts, they are rent; that is, they fall back into their old unbelief. The soul that has been a long time strengthened by the faith is more capable of all good works than when first initiated in the new doctrine. Peter confessed his Christian faith very differently after he had been filled with the new wine of the Holy Spirit, in the imperial palace at Rome before Nero, from the manner in which he answered the maid-servant in the house of Caiaphas. In the latter case, Peter was an image of human weakness; in the former, of the power of God. Christ reminded him, after his resurrection, of his high calling, when he required a threefold confession of his love, and committed to him the sheep which he had purchased with his own blood to feed; and this should teach the good shepherd that wanderers must not always be corrected by severe denunciations, but often their improvement is promoted by affectionate expostulation." To Meganfried, an imperial counsellor, Alcuin wrote: "We read in the Acts of the Apostles that Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem to James and the other apostles, in

order to confer with them on the question, how the gospel should be published to the heathen; and they resolved, unanimously, that nothing of a legal burden should be imposed upon them. And the apostle of the Gentiles boasted that he supported himself by the labour of his hands; this he did for the purpose of cutting away all occasion for charging the preachers of the gospel with self-interested views, and to show that only the man who was inflamed with the love of Christ ought to publish the gospel, as the Saviour himself charged his disciples: 'Freely ye have received, freely give.' If the easy yoke of Christ and his light burden were preached to the stiff-necked Saxons with as much earnestness as the restitution of tithes and penal laws against the most trivial offences are enforced, they would probably make no opposition to baptism. Lastly, let there be teachers of the faith formed on the example of the apostles—preachers, not robbers; let them trust in the grace of Him who said: 'Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes.' (Luke x. 4.)" Thus also he wrote to Archbishop Arno: "Be a preacher of godliness, not a tithe-collector. Tithes have ruined the faith of the Saxons. Why must a yoke be laid on these rude people which neither we nor our brethren have been able to bear? We trust, therefore, that through faith in Christ the souls of believers will be saved."

8. *Lindger and Willehad.*

We wish here to mention two men who in their ministry among the Saxons knew how to guard against the faults censured by the Abbot Alcuin, and to present the model of genuine missionaries. One of these was Lindger. He was by birth a Frieslander, and the seeds of Christianity were early sown in his heart. His grandfather was a distinguished man of that people, named Ado Wursing. He belonged as a Pagan to that class of persons of whom the Apostle Paul says, that they who have not the law, and yet by nature do the works of the law, are a law unto themselves:—those who, if they have received no other revelation, yet hear the voice of God in their consciences. He took care of the poor and oppressed, and was an upright judge. But by his zeal against all injustice, he drew on himself the enmity of Radbod, the

Pagan king of the Frieslanders, and was obliged to take refuge in the adjacent kingdom of the Franks. He afterwards became a zealous Christian, and assisted Willibrord (who has been already mentioned, and who was called to the archbishopric of Utrecht) in his labours among his countrymen.

Lindger was a grandson of this pious man. When a child, he gave signs of his future destination. As soon as he began to read and walk, he collected pieces of leather and the bark of trees and made them into little books. When he found any dark juice, he tried to write with it, as he had seen older persons do. And when he was asked what he had done in the day, he answered that he had been writing or reading. And when further asked, "Who taught you that?" He replied, "God has taught me." He showed early a great thirst for knowledge, and entreated his parents to intrust him for education to some pious man. They placed him under the care of the Abbot Gregory. His desire of knowledge led him afterwards to resort to the renowned teacher of his age, Alcuin, at York. Enriched with acquirements and books, he returned to his native country, where he was welcomed by his former teacher, the Abbot Gregory. After his death, he laboured, amidst manifold dangers and difficulties, for the conversion of the Frieslanders and Saxons. He founded, first of all, a Christian church on the island dedicated to Fosite, one of the pagan divinities, which hence received the name of Heligoland. After the overthrow of the Saxons, the district of Münster became the settled scene of his ministry, and he was consecrated bishop of that place. His missionary zeal impelled him to seek a new sphere of labour, attended with greater danger. He wished to visit the wild Normans, who had struck the Christian nations with great terror, and among whom he could reckon on no support; but the Emperor Charles would not allow him to leave his diocese. Even in the illness which befell him not long before his death in the year 809, he struggled with his bodily weakness, in order not to interrupt the discharge of his spiritual duties. On the Sunday preceding the night of his death, he preached twice, to two different congregations in his diocese: in the morning in the church at Coesfeld; in the afternoon, about three o'clock, in the church at Billerbeck, where he

expended the remnant of his strength in performing mass. He expired, with his scholars assembled round his bed, on the night of the 26th of March.

The second person to whom we have referred was Willehad, from Northumberland. By the report of what other missionaries had effected among the Frieslanders and Saxons, he was impelled to follow their example. He laboured first of all in the district where Boniface had met with martyrdom. Many persons were baptized by him; many of the better class intrusted their children to him for education. But when he betook himself to the province now called Gröningen, where idolatry still predominated, the fury of the pagan population was so excited by his exertions that they sought to murder him. But by the advice of one of the more moderate among them, they agreed first to inquire of their gods, by casting lots. And since even superstition must serve the will of God, Providence so ordered it that the lot was in favour of his preservation, and he was able to leave unhurt. He now proceeded to the district of Drenthe. His discourses here had begun to meet with much acceptance, when some of his scholars suffered themselves to be led away by intemperate zeal, and hastened to destroy the idolatrous temples, instead of first banishing by the power of Christ the idols from the hearts of their worshippers. This roused the wrath of the Pagans. They rushed upon the missionaries, and Willehad was loaded with blows. One of the infuriated mob aimed a stroke at him with a sword, intending to kill him, but the stroke only cut a thong by which the box in which, according to the custom of the times, he carried relics, was fastened about his neck, and thus he escaped. The prevalent notions of the times led persons to see in this incident, not the universal providence of that Being who numbers the hairs of our heads, and without whom a sparrow does not fall to the ground, and who can make use of every means for his holy purposes as he pleases,—but rather a proof of the protective power of relics. Even the pagans were induced by it to abstain from their attacks on Willehad, whom they believed to be protected by a higher power. When the Emperor Charles heard of Willehad's undaunted zeal for the propagation of the gospel, he sent for him, and assigned him his post in the district which afterwards formed

the diocese of Bremen. He was at first to labour as a priest among the Frieslanders and Saxons, and to perform every part of the pastoral office till a bishopric could be founded. After a while, his successful ministry was interrupted by a fresh revolt of the heathen population. He believed that it was his duty to follow his Lord's command (Matt. x. 23), and not needlessly to risk his life. In order to preserve his life for preaching the gospel still longer, he availed himself of the opportunity offered to him for flight.

He afterwards found a quiet place of refuge in a convent founded by Willebrord at Afternach (Epternach), which also became a rendezvous for his scholars, who had been dispersed by persecutions and wars. He spent two years at this place, occupied with teaching, reading the Scriptures, and the multiplication of transcripts of them.

At last, after peace had been restored among the conquered Saxons, the bishopric intended by the Emperor Charles was founded at Bremen, and Willehad was installed in it. While on one of his visitation journeys, which he was obliged to take frequently on account of the peculiar character of his new diocese, he fell ill of a violent fever in the year 789, at Blexem on the Weser, not far from Wegesak, so that there were apprehensions of his speedy death. His scholars stood weeping round his bed. One of them, who was on very intimate terms with the bishop, broke silence, and with tears expressed the pain they would feel if their spiritual father were taken from them, and their anxiety for the bereaved congregations, which were scarcely won over to Christianity. "Oh, venerable father," he said, "do not leave those so soon whom you have but lately gained for the Lord. Leave not the congregations and the clergy destitute, who by your zeal have been brought together, that the weak flocks may not be given up to the attacks of the wolves. Do not withdraw your presence from us, your poor scholars, that we may not wander about like sheep without a shepherd." Willehad replied, with deep emotion, "Oh, do not wish, my son, that I should be any longer detained from the presence of my Lord; do not force me to remain any longer in this wearisome earthly life. I do not desire to live here any longer, and I am not afraid to die. I will only beseech my God, whom I have always loved with my whole heart, whom I

have always served with my whole soul, that he would grant me such a reward of my labour as it may please him. But the sheep which he committed to my care, I trust in him to preserve them; for if I have been able to do any good, I have accomplished it through his power. The grace of him with whose mercy the whole earth is full, will not be wanting to you."

9. *Anschar, the Apostle of the North.*

If we compare Boniface and Anschar together, we shall again see an example of two of very different mental constitutions whom the Spirit of God that actuated them employed as his instruments. In Boniface there was a resemblance to the Apostle Peter, in Anschar to the Apostle John: in Boniface there was more of ardent, impetuous power; in Anschar, more of quiet but active love. Boniface was more fitted to produce great outward effects; it was Anschar's gift not to grow weary of small beginnings, but quietly, with persistive love, to cherish the inconsiderable germs which are important as the commencing-point of a plantation that will advance to greatness.

Anschar appears to have received his fresh religious impressions into his opening mind when a mere child, through the early influence of a pious mother, whom he lost in his fifth year. When his father sent him to school after her death, he fell into the society of rude boys, to whose influence he yielded so much as to forget his early impressions of piety. Yet still they remained unconsciously hidden in his soul, and in a vision of the night were recalled to him. "It was as if he found himself in a slippery place, covered with mire, from which he was hardly able to find a way out. But near this place he thought he saw a pleasant path, and on this path he beheld a graceful female, handsomely adorned, and near her several other women in white garments, among whom was his own mother. When he saw them, he wished to hasten to them, but he could not get out of that slippery place. When these women were advanced nearer, he thought he heard one who stood at their head, very richly adorned, and who appeared to be the Virgin Mary, utter these

words, 'My son, wilt thou come to thy mother?' And when he answered her eagerly that he was anxious to do so, she said to him again, 'If thou wishest to come to our company thou must guard against all vain waywardness, and diligently pursue a serious course of conduct.' After this dream a surprising change came over him, at which his own companions could not sufficiently wonder; instead of playing, he occupied himself with reading, thinking, and other serious useful employments. When he afterwards became a monk in the French convent of Corbie, and gave himself up most entirely to a monastic life, he had another vision, in which the hidden life with Christ in God was represented. He seemed as if transported to the assembly of the blest. All had their faces towards the east, and celebrating in their hymns of praise an appearance in the east; and their united hymn of praise filled the souls of the hearers with inexpressible delight. In the east itself was seen a wonderful splendour, an unchangeable light of surpassing brilliance, from which the most beautiful colours shone forth. All the companies of saints who stood exulting on all sides, drew joy from the sight. "It was such unbounded splendour," says Anschar, "that I could see neither beginning nor end of it. And when I had looked round on all sides, I could see only the superficial appearance and not what dwelt within the centre of this light. Yet I believed that He was there whom the angels desire to look upon; for from it proceeded an inexpressible glory, by which the whole length and breadth of the assembly of the blest was enlightened. He himself was, in a certain sense, in all, and all were in him; he himself surrounded all from without, and he himself was inwardly among them; he satisfied all their wants, and he was their guiding soul. He hovered over them protectively; he was the support which bore them up from beneath. Neither sun nor moon gave light there, nor was heaven or earth to be seen. And yet it was not a brightness which dazzled the eyes of the beholders, but one that imparted to them a pleasurable sensation. There was nothing corporeal, but all was incorporeal, though there was an appearance of the corporeal. It was something inexpressible." When his two guides, Peter and John, had led him in front of this boundless light, a voice, as from the Divine Majesty, which

appeared represented to him by this immeasurable, unchangeable light, sounded forth to him, full of inexpressible sweetness: "Go hence, and return to me with the crown of martyrdom." At these words the whole host of those who were praising God were dumb, and then with reverent looks they prayed. But Anschar saw not the face of Him from whom the voice came. "After these words," he says, "I was sad, because I was obliged to return to the world; but, quieted by the promise that I should return from it again hereafter, I went back with my guides. On my return, as well as on my way thither, they said nothing to me, but gave me such a look of tender love as when a mother gazes on her only son. And thus I returned again to the body. In going and returning there was no effort and no delay; we were immediately where we wished to be. And although I have expressed something of such blessedness, yet I admit that my tongue can never express what my soul experienced. But my soul itself experienced it not as it actually was, for it appeared to me to be what no eye had seen, nor ear heard, nor had entered into the heart of man to conceive."

We have represented this vision according to Anschar's own description, because it gives us so deep an insight into the divine life of a simple Christian soul. This vision made a powerful and indelible impression upon him. He was awoke by it to a new earnestness in the Christian life, and it animated him henceforward with the thought that he was called to die the precious death of a martyr for the faith. Two years afterwards he had another remarkable vision. He had been engaged in prayer in a small chapel to which he was often used to retire for secret devotion, and when he rose from prayer, there entered at the door a person of noble countenance in a Jewish dress, whose eyes shone as if full of light. He immediately knew it was the Lord Christ, and threw himself at his feet. As he lay prostrate, the apparition called upon him to stand up; and when full of awe he stood before Him, and was not able to look on his countenance for the excessive splendour of the light which beamed from his eyes, the Lord said with a kind voice to him: "Confess thy sins, that thou mayest be justified." Anschar answered: "Lord, why need I say it to thee? thou knowest all: nothing is hid from thee." The Lord said: "I indeed know all things,

but yet it is my will that men should confess their sins to me in order that they may receive forgiveness." Thereupon he made confession of sin, and knelt down to pray. The Lord then said, "Fear not; I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions." With these words he vanished, and Anschar woke full of joyful confidence that his sins were forgiven.

At a later period he was sent with some other monks from the monastery of Corbie as a colony for spreading Christianity and Christian education to the monastery of Corvei, situated on the Weser, where he had to conduct a school and to preach to the people. Under the various difficulties with which this monastery had to combat in a wild and poor district, he had an opportunity of exercising himself in Christian patience, and certainly this was a good preparation for his missionary calling.

When the Jutland king, Harold, who was baptized at Ingleheim in the year 826, was returning home from a visit to his ally the Emperor Lewis the Pious, that emperor wished a zealous preacher of the gospel to accompany the Danes, to confirm and promote their faith, and to spread it more widely. It was difficult, however, to find one who was not alarmed by the reports of the wildness of those northmen, and of the evil character of their idolatry. But the Abbot Wala, of the monastery of Corbie, to which Anschar had then returned, informed the emperor that he knew a man of glowing zeal for the cause of God, who longed even to suffer for it. Anschar was called and was ready immediately to go with King Harold to Denmark. While his abbot visited the court, Anschar prepared himself in the retirement of a vineyard, by reading the Scriptures and prayer, for his great calling. He appeared always serious and in deep thought, so that those who could not look into his interior, might imagine that he was afraid of dangers and toils, and repented of the resolution he had taken. But it was in him only the consciousness of the greatness and difficulty of the calling that made him serious, since he began the work, not in the arrogance of human self-confidence, but with fear and trembling in dependence on God; he was well aware of his own unworthiness and weakness, he depended only on the power of God, and appearing more quiet and reserved before men, he had turned his whole heart to Him. When another monk, Autbert, who wished to accompany him

in his missionary work, asked him whether he still kept to his resolution, he answered: "When I was asked whether I would go for God's name among the heathen, to publish the gospel, I could not venture to decline such a call. Yes; with all my powers I wish to go hence, and no man can make me waver in this resolution."

The most striking points in Anschar's character were, his unwearied patience, his winning love, and his steadfast faith, when dangers and obstacles stood in his way. These distinguishing qualities were tried in a variety of ways from his first entrance on this mission. The Danes whom he accompanied on their return to their native country, appear to have been at that time great strangers to the nature of Christianity. Anschar met with rough treatment from them till his arrival at Cologne (whence they were to pass by the Rhine to Holland, and then proceed by sea to Denmark), when the bishop of that city, Hadelbod, furnished him with a convenient vessel; this induced King Harold to become his associate, and Anschar now succeeded in subduing the rude manners of the Danes.

King Harold was afterwards expelled from his kingdom. Anschar could do nothing more excepting to purchase native children in order to educate them for teachers to the people, and found a little school at Hadeby, in Schleswig, the first Christian institution in these regions. His companion, Autbert, was taken from him by an illness which obliged him to return to his native country. Yet these untoward circumstances could not turn him aside—a proof how free he was from self; for the more self-love is mingled with zeal, flowing even from the purest fountain, so much more restless and impatient it is to see the fruit of its own labours. In proportion as zeal is purified from the alloy of self, it carries on the work of God, in the consciousness that "neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth is anything, but God that giveth the increase;" it will leave to Him when and where to give that increase.

While in this unfavourable situation he received a call to a new missionary undertaking in Sweden, and immediately he complied with it, convinced that it came from God. He proceeded to that country in a merchant-vessel, as an ambassador from King Lewis the Pious, with presents for the king of

Sweden. They were attacked by pirates and lost everything. With great difficulty they gained the shore and saved their lives. Several of Anschar's companions wished to return, but he declared "that what might happen to him was in God's hands, but that he had made up his mind not to return until he had discovered whether it was God's will that the gospel should be published there."

At a later period he was suddenly fallen upon in the seat of his diocese at Hamburgh by the pagan Normans; he lost everything, and saved himself with great difficulty. He was obliged to take refuge on the estate of a pious female of rank in Holstein; but as soon as he could find safety and quiet in his own diocese, he was immediately intent on widening the sphere of his labours. The unfavourable prospect on account of the enmity of Horick, the reigning sovereign of Denmark, who had taken a principal part in those incursions into the diocese of Hamburgh, could not deter him. He knew the omnipotence of love; he prayed continually for the conversion and salvation of those who threatened destruction to him and all Christians with fire and sword. He allowed himself to be employed by King Lewis of Germany as an ambassador to King Horick; he made him presents, won his heart by love, and at last Horick placed such great confidence in Anschar that he would treat only through him with the German empire: and he then made use of this personal attachment of the king, to accomplish something for the Christian church. He obtained permission from him to erect a church in the town of Schleswig, which, as a mart of commerce, was peculiarly fitted to spread Christianity further inland. He also procured from this king a letter of introduction to the Swedish king, Olof. Horick wrote to the effect that "he had never in his life seen so good a man; that he never found a man so trustworthy; and since he had found so much goodness in him, he had permitted him to undertake what he wished in reference to Christianity in his own land, and he hoped that King Olof would also permit him to publish the gospel in his kingdom, for he certainly wished to effect nothing but what was good and right."

When Anschar arrived in Sweden, he found the pagans greatly opposed to the strange religion. His friends advised him only to make use of the presents he had brought with

him in order to rescue his life from the impending danger. But Anschar answered, "I would give nothing here to redeem my life; for if the Lord has so determined, I am ready to suffer tortures and even death, here, for his name's sake." He invited the king to an entertainment, gave him the presents, and won his heart, for he knew well how to become all things to all men; and afterwards the Lord helped him in the way which his infinite wisdom had opened for him.

Anschar experienced many wonderful answers to prayer in the course of his laborious and dangerous ministry. This was known, and many sick persons came to him, to obtain a cure by his prayers. But he himself disowned the reputation of a worker of miracles, and said: "If I were thought worthy before my God of that, I would beseech him to grant me this miracle, that by his grace he would make of me a holy man."

When, after four-and-thirty years labour, in his sixty-fourth year, he came to his end through the sufferings of a painful malady, he frequently said with Job, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" After receiving the Holy Supper, he raised his hands to heaven and prayed that the grace of God might forgive every one who had ever in any way injured him. He then frequently repeated the words, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness. Be merciful to me a sinner. Into thy hands I commend my spirit." And after he had commended his spirit to the grace of God, looking towards heaven, he left this world, in the year 865.

10. *The Martyr Adalbert, of Prussia.*

Adalbert was descended from a respectable family in Prague, where he was born in the year 956. He received his education in Magdeburgh, and then returned to his own country. In the year 983 he was chosen bishop of his native city. Among this people there prevailed at that time a great heathen rudeness, and Adalbert who could not endure a pagan life connected with an outward profession of Christianity, had, in consequence, to maintain a hard conflict. He had no deficiency of glowing zeal and steadfastness, but rather failed in moderation and all-enduring patience, which, among a rude

people who would not submit to his control, were here put to a severe trial. Thus he frequently gave notice of his intention of leaving the congregation which would not follow him as their shepherd, nor give up their lawlessness. He wished to find a place of rest in monasticism, and sought out in Italy the venerable Nilus, who shone as a light in darkness, and whose life and labours we shall notice in the sequel But he was always under the necessity of returning to his forsaken untamed flock, and as often driven from it.

When for the third time he had taken his departure, his glowing zeal for the spread of Christianity prompted him to visit Hungary, where, not long before, the seeds of Christianity had begun to germinate. He was gladly received by Prince Geisa, who had consented to receive baptism through the influence of his wife; but he could make little impression on either by his exhortations. Yet probably it was owing to his society and conversation that a remarkable effect was produced on the mind of their son, young Stephanus, who afterwards contributed principally to the establishment of the Christian church in Hungary.

But his restless spirit soon turned away from Hungary. He resolved to go, where no missionary had ever been, to the Pagans in Prussia. The Polish duke, Boleslad I., to whom he applied for assistance, gave him a vessel and thirty soldiers for a guard.

Thus he went to Dantzig, which was at that time the border-town between Prussia and Poland. Here he first began his ministry and succeeded in baptizing many; he then left this district in order to visit the opposite shore. When landed there, he sent the vessel back with the crew. He wished to be altogether left to the protection of his God, and as a messenger of peace not to come forward under human protection; he also was anxious to avoid everything which might create suspicion in the minds of the Pagans; he only retained the priest Benedict and his pupil Gaudentius with him. It was the Frische Haff (Fresh Sea) where they landed, and they betook themselves in a little boat to an island formed by the Pregel at its mouth; but the inhabitants came with cudgels to drive them away, and one of them gave him such a severe blow with an oar that the psalter, out of which he had been singing, was knocked out

of his hand, and he himself fell to the ground. When he recovered himself, his first words were, "Lord, I thank thee that thou hast thought me worthy of at least one blow for my crucified Saviour!" On Saturday they passed over to the other side of the Pregel, on the coast of Samland. The lord of the manor, whom they met with, brought them to his village, where a great multitude of people assembled. When Adalbert was asked who he was, whence and with what design he was come, he explained to them in a gentle tone, after he had said who he was and whence he came: "On account of your salvation I am come hither, that you may forsake your deaf and dumb gods and acknowledge your Creator, beside whom there is no God, in order that believing in his name you may receive eternal life and be made partakers of an imperishable existence of heavenly joy." When the pagans heard these words they gnashed their teeth, struck him with their sticks, and threatened him with cudgels. He might think himself well off, they said, that he had come so far unhurt; he could save his life only by a quick departure. All persons in that kingdom had one law and one manner of life. They who served another unknown God, if they did not go away that night, would be beheaded the next day. They were put on board a vessel, but were obliged immediately to leave the coast, and remained five days in the place to which they came. When they woke on the last day, Gaudentius told his spiritual father a dream which he had had in the night. "I saw on the altar, in the middle, a golden cup half full of wine. No one was there watching. When I wished to drink of the wine the attendant at the altar would not permit it, for he said that it was not allowable for me or any other man; the wine was to be kept for the bishop for his spiritual refreshment another day." "My son," said Adalbert, who believed that he saw in this an intimation of his crown of martyrdom, "may God bless this vision; one dare not trust a dream which may deceive." At daybreak they began to set forward on their journey, and went on joyfully, singing psalms, and calling on the Lord Christ through the thick forests. Their singing shortened the distance. About noon they came to a district laid out in fields. Gaudentius here celebrated mass, and Adalbert partook of the Holy Supper; then they sat down on the

turf and enjoyed some of the provisions they had brought with them. After Adalbert had repeated a verse out of the Bible and sung a psalm, he stood up, and after he had gone a little further he sat down again. Being exhausted, he fell into a deep sleep, and so did his companions; but they were awoke out of sleep in a terrible way: they were startled by the shouts of a band of furious pagans, and were all put in chains. Adalbert maintained his tranquillity undisturbed, and said to his two companions, "My brethren, do not be troubled; you know that we suffer this for the name of the Lord, whose might is above all might, whose beauty is above all beauty, whose grace is inexpressible; what is there more beautiful than to surrender sweet life for the sweetest Jesus!" Then a priest came forth from the infuriated multitude and struck, with his lance, the man of God on his breast, with all his might; the rest also vented their rage upon him. He died raising his eyes and hands to heaven, praying to the Lord for his own salvation and that of his persecutors. This took place on April 23, in the year 997.

The age in which Adalbert lived was not rich in heralds of the Christian faith. Only when the church is rich internally in the gifts of the Spirit, will the divine fulness flow over outwardly, and the water of life while it fructifies the heathen world will flow back with a blessing to the districts from which it issued; but where the spiritual life is wanting, no salutary influence can go forth on those who are without the pale of the church. When the salt is become insipid, nothing can be salted with it. This is true of the tenth century, in which the seeds of Christianity that had previously been sown threatened to be altogether suppressed by the thorns and thistles of sensual barbarism. Men were here needed who might go forth as missionaries, home-missionaries, among the intractable people who had assumed the name of Christians, but among whom little of the spirit and life of Christ was to be found. Such an one was that man of God, Nilus, in a country where lawlessness, superstition, and ignorance had spread very widely, and on this account we place next to the foreign missionaries—

11. *The Monk Nilus.*

Nilus was of Greek descent, but born at Rossano, in Calabria, in the year 910. His pious parents, who had only one child, a daughter, prayed to the Lord that he would grant them a son. Their prayer was heard, and this son was Nilus. They carried the child to church and dedicated him to the service of God. They named him Nilus, after a distinguished and venerated monk of the fifth century, to whose character this youth who bore his name did actually correspond. The seed which his pious parents scattered in his mind in childhood, operated to preserve him from the corruptions of the age; but as he lost his parents early, he was brought up under the care of his married sister, who was also a pious woman. From childhood he read the biographies of the ancient venerated monks, such as Anthony and Hilarion, and thus a spirit of earnest and deep piety was awakened in him, which in early life taught him to shun the moral corruption in the houses of the great, and to abhor the amulets and magical charms as well as other arts of superstition which were then so much in vogue.

When at a later period his repugnance to the general corruption of morals around him impelled him to a stricter asceticism, he had to sustain manifold conflicts with himself, and by means of them he had abundant opportunity given him of exploring the depths of his own heart. Thoughts tending to evil mingled themselves with his holiest emotions —temptations to spiritual pride which most readily connect themselves with ascetic striving after holiness by self-conquest, and temptations to sensuality. Often when he was praying and singing in the church such thoughts rose within him—"Look at the altar; perhaps thou wilt see an angel, or a flame of fire, or the Holy Ghost, as many have beheld such things." And had he resigned himself to such thoughts he would easily have fallen into the most dangerous self-deceptions of enthusiasm, and the divine life in him, as in many who could not overcome such temptations, would have been destroyed by pride and vanity. The angels of darkness, who know how to clothe themselves as angels of light, would have overpowered his soul and involved it in their snares. Such was the temptation in which his Saviour preceded him

when the Prince of Darkness proposed to him to make bread of the stones of the desert, and to throw himself from a pinnacle of the temple. The faithful disciple imitated his model. Nothing can so quench the fiery darts of the Wicked One as the sobriety of humility, the working out our salvation with fear and trembling. This gives that sober-mindedness which can counteract all the intoxicating influence of self-exaltation. The more such temptations to pride pressed on Nilus, the more he humbled himself. He closed his eyes that he might not perceive tempting objects, and so wrestled with himself in penitence and tears that the drops of sweat fell off from him on the ground. Once when he was occupied with writing, reading, and singing, in St. Peter's, at Rome, and was beset with such temptations, he threw himself before the altar, and said to the Saviour, "Lord, thou knowest that I am weak; have compassion upon me, relieve me of the conflict which makes me despair of life." He then fell asleep and saw a vision. He beheld Christ before him hanging on the cross, only separated from him by a very thin white curtain. He exclaimed, "Lord, have mercy upon me, and bless thy servant." The Saviour three times from the cross extended his right hand over him. He awoke and was freed from all his temptations. In an age when many of those who set themselves in opposition to the prevalent degeneracy of manners sought to be justified by their own works, he felt urged rather to surrender himself entirely to the Saviour and to depend on him alone. The scholar of Nilus who gives this account, adds: "What much fasting and watching could not effect, was effected by thus humbling himself before the Lord, and by a knowledge of his own weakness."

Nilus was frequently visited by men of all ranks, and the most distinguished both of the clergy and laity, who used to propose various questions to him. He availed himself of these opportunities to direct the attention of persons to the one thing needful, to warn them against a false confidence in a mere outward Christianity, a dead faith and outward works, and to call them off from barren subtleties to that which was necessary for the salvation of their souls. When he once saw coming to him the archbishop with an imperial privy counsellor, besides several priests and magistrates, and

private persons, he said: "Behold! there they come to entangle me in an empty, idle conversation. But, my Lord Jesus Christ, free us from the devices of Satan, and grant that we may think, and speak, and do, what is well pleasing to Thee!" And after he had so prayed, he opened the book that he held in his hand, a biography of St. Symeon, and made a mark in the place where it first opened. When those who had come to visit him had saluted him and sat down, he gave the privy counsellor the book to read where he had made a mark, and he read the passage in which it was said, that not one in a thousand is saved. The others who heard this were shocked, and said, "God forbid that it should be so; that is not true. Whoever says that is a heretic. If it be so, then we have been baptized in vain; in vain we adore the Crucified; in vain we partake of the Holy Supper; in vain we are called Christians." After they had been talking in this manner, and neither the archbishop nor the counsellor said anything to them, Nilus said to them, in a mild tone: "How now? If I could prove to you that the ancient fathers, that Chrysostom, Basil, the Evangelists, and the Apostle Paul, say the very same thing, what could you allege—you, who on account of your wicked lives, denounce as falsehood the words spoken by the Holy Ghost? But I tell you, my brethren, that by all that you have just repeated, you will find no favour with God." And in order to remind them that their continuance in a religion in which they had been educated, by a profession which involved no sacrifice of self-renunciation, would be absolutely worthless, he added: "What idols or what heresy have you forsaken, in order to turn to the Lord Christ?" And when he further wished to impress upon them that orthodoxy, without a life corresponding to the faith, would avail nothing, he said: "If one of you ventured to profess himself a heretic, and enters his own town as such, would not all join in stoning him? Be assured, it will be of no advantage to you that you are no heretics; if your life is not improved, and is not radically amended, no one can rescue you from destruction." All present, when they heard this language, were greatly disturbed; they sighed deeply and said: "Woe to us, miserable sinners!" An officer of the imperial guard, Nicholas, now put in a word, to show that the gospel was not so strict: "For what reason,

father, does the gospel say, that whoever gives a cup of cold water to a poor man, shall not lose his reward?" Nilus answered: "That was said, that no poor man might excuse himself by saying, 'I have no wood to warm the water with.' But what do *you* do, who deny the poor even a draught of cold water?" Then one of the nobles who led an unchaste life, and yet wished to feel safe in his sins, said: "I should like to know, holy father, whether the wonderful Solomon was saved or not." Nilus, who saw through him, replied: "I should like to know of you, whether you will be saved or lost. For of what advantage is it to me or you, that Solomon is saved or lost; for to us, not to him, it has been said, 'He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery;' and 'if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy.'* But who can say of Solomon, of whom we are nowhere told in Holy Writ, as of Manasseh, that after he had sinned he repented, that he is saved?" Upon this one of the priests, in order to turn the conversation, asked of what kind was the forbidden fruit which Adam tasted in Paradise? Nilus answered, "A crab-apple;" at which they all laughed. He then said to them, "Laugh not; such a question deserves such an answer. Moses has not told us precisely what tree it was; why should we wish to know what the Holy Scriptures have concealed? You do not trouble yourself about how you are created, how you have been placed like Adam in Paradise, what was the command, or rather what were the commands, which you have not kept, on account of which you also have been banished from Paradise, or rather from the kingdom of God, and how you can regain your original glory and honour; and yet you want to know the name of a tree where one tree is as good as another; and even if you knew its name you could not tell of what kind the root, the leaves, and the bark were, or whether it was a large tree or a small one. And who can give you information about what no one has seen?"

When on another day he visited a neighbouring castle, he met with a Jew who had been known to him from his youth, who was in high repute as a physician. This man

* These words in their connection (1 Cor. iii. 17) have certainly another reference, but they may justly be applied to those who defile and destroy the temple of God by unchastity.

said to him: "I have heard much of your asceticism and your abstemiousness, and I know your constitution of body, and am surprised that you have not had epileptic fits; but now I will give you a medicine suited to your constitution, that will last you all the days of your life, so that you need fear no sickness." Nilus replied, without making further inquiry after such a preservative against all diseases, "One of your own countrymen, a Hebrew, has told us, 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.' (Psa. cxviii. 8.) As we confide in our physician, our God and Lord Jesus Christ, we do not need your remedies."

A governor, sent from Constantinople, who had been set over all the western provinces of the Greek empire, had, by an undertaking which appeared salutary to him but was burdensome to many, excited great dissatisfaction. The inhabitants of the district of Rossano were led away by momentary excitement to commit deeds of violence. They afterwards repented, and were uncertain what they should do, since they dreaded the vengeance of the governor. Driven to despair, they had almost come to the resolution to make the evil still worse, and to raise a general rebellion against the Greek empire, on which they were dependent. They turned their thoughts towards Nilus, and the recollection of him infused confidence into their souls; they confided in his mediation. As soon as this man, full of philanthropy, who did not refuse his sympathy even to the erring, was called for by them, he hastened to them. When he arrived he availed himself of what had occurred to give them suitable admonitions, and then required the citizens no longer to close their gates against the governor, whose vengeance they dreaded, but admit him without delay. He entered full of wrath, and while the magistrates and priests, and the people in general, were struck with terror, and did not venture to say a word, Nilus appeared with the greatest calmness before the governor, and spoke to him with a frank independence. His venerable appearance calmed the anger of the governor, who left with him to decide respecting the punishment due to the rebels. Nilus said: "It is indeed a grave crime that they have committed. Were it the act of only a few of the higher class, the merited punishment might fall upon them; but now the whole multitude share in the

guilt. Would you pass sentence of death against the whole population, and make so large a place empty of human beings?" The governor answered: "No; we do not wish to shed blood, but we wish to seize their goods, and use them for the imperial treasury, that they may be brought to their senses, and not venture on a like attempt again." "And what good will it do you," said Nilus, "if you enrich the imperial treasury but ruin your own soul? How will the heavenly King forgive your guilt, if you do not forgive them who have committed a fault against you, you who are alive to-day and are dead to-morrow?" He offered, if the governor thought that he could not grant a pardon without the emperor's consent, to write to him himself; and at last he succeeded in carrying his point. After he had restored quiet and order he returned to the repose of his cell, which he had unwillingly forsaken only at the call of benevolence, and thanked God for what he had been able to accomplish.

In this manner he often tore himself away from the quiet, holy rest of a life devoted to prayer and meditation, and descended from his elevation to the distresses of suffering humanity, in order to interest himself on behalf of those who were oppressed by the power of rulers who did not fear the Lord. In the most inclement weather, through cold and heat, he took for such objects long journeys on foot. He often reached the end of his wanderings, soaked with rain, or benumbed hands and feet, or scorched by the sun's rays, exhausted and faint with hunger and thirst; but love made all things light.

On one occasion the imperial chamberlain came in great state from Constantinople to a neighbouring castle, and expressed his astonishment that Nilus did not meet him with the other abbots. The first bishop in the empire, the patriarch—he believed—would have shown him more respect. But those who knew Nilus better, answered: "This old man is no patriarch, but he feels no fear before the patriarchs: nor before the emperor, whom all fear." As the chamberlain still felt much surprised at his conduct, he wrote him a letter, in which he requested that either he would not conceal himself from him if he came to him, or that he would visit the castle, in order to bless him and his retinue. Partly moved by his entreaties, partly to obtain

a favourable hearing, in case he should have to intercede for the poor with him, Nilus accepted the invitation. The chamberlain was struck with awe when he came into his presence. He ordered a copy of the Gospels to be brought in order to swear by them, and to ratify by an oath what he wished to promise him. But Nilus referred him, when he thus began, to what Christ said in his sermon on the mount respecting swearing, and asked: "Why will you give occasion to mistrust your words, and why do you make such a beginning of our conference, by transgressing the word of the Lord? For every one who is ready on slight occasions to take an oath, is also ready to speak falsehoods." The scholar of Nilus says of him: "I am convinced that if all men under the sun met together, in order to ask suitable counsel of him, they would want nothing that would contribute to their advantage; for his counsel was as the counsel of God, full of intelligence and salutary. If men followed him, he led them to a glorious issue; if they despised him, danger to the soul and bodily harm ensued. And I could mention many particular instances, if it would not extend the narrative to an inordinate length."

The widow of a duke of Capua, with whom Nilus was connected, named Abara, had excited her two sons to assassinate a man of rank who was her nephew. She afterwards was struck with remorse, and applied to the bishops to impose penance upon her by way of satisfaction for her sins. They wished to make it easy for her to come to terms with the Almighty. They only prescribed for her to repeat the Psalter three times every week, and to give alms to the poor. But the duchess could not by these means silence the upbraidings of conscience. She wished to take counsel of Nilus, and to receive something to calm her mind from the lips of one who was universally revered as a man of God. Nilus complied with her request to visit her. When he came, she fell trembling at his feet, confessed her sins, and implored forgiveness for them. Nilus desired her to rise, and said: "Do not act thus, for I am a sinful man, and have no power to bind and to loose. Go home, ask the bishops what you must do, and follow their advice." Upon this, she told him what the bishops had advised her to do. Nilus now said, in order to bring her to a sense of her guilt,

and to prove whether she was really penetrated with a feeling of it, "To pray in the Psalter, and to give alms to the poor, is useful to yourself and to the indigent. But this will not call back him who has been unjustly deprived of life, nor will the grief of those who mourn his loss be thereby lessened. If you will take advice from a poor man like myself, do this: Give one of your sons to the relations of the murdered person, to do with him what they please; for the Lord has said, 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, his blood shall be shed again.'" Then said the duchess: "I cannot do that, for I fear they will kill him." Then his holy anger was kindled against her, because she felt so little the greatness of her guilt; and with the glowing zeal of a prophet, he denounced against her the divine judgment that would befall her and her family, since she trusted in her superior rank, and would not acknowledge that it is the Lord who makes poor and rich, who brings down and exalts. She then began to weep bitterly, and wished to fill the hands of the man of God with gold, as if she could purchase from him the forgiveness of sins. But Nilus hastened away, without being allured by the abundance of gold, or moved by her tears, or awed by her power, in order to let her know that he would not be a partaker in her sins.

A countryman of Nilus, Philagathus, or John, bishop of Piacenza, who was too much inclined to mix himself up with political matters to his own hurt, had formed a connection with the Roman usurper Crescentius, who had made him pope after expelling Gregory V. Nilus felt himself compelled to warn him, in a letter, of the consequences of his ambition. He called upon him to renounce the secular honours which he enjoyed to excess, and to retire from the world. In the year 998, Gregory was reinstated by the arms of the Emperor Otto III., and cruel revenge was taken on the archbishop. His eyes were put out, his tongue and nose cut off, and he was then consigned to a dungeon. As soon as the news of this reached Nilus, then in his eighty-eighth year, at his monastery near Gaeta, he hastened to Rome, although he was out of health, and it was Lent,—a season when any interruption in his devotional and penitential exercises was peculiarly annoying. He requested the emperor to place the archbishop under his care, that they might live together, and join in

acts of penitence for their sins. The emperor gave his consent. But when the archbishop was exposed, soon afterwards, to fresh public insult, Nilus declared to the pope and the emperor that they offended not him, but God; out of love to him they had promised to pardon the unfortunate prelate. And as they had shown no mercy to the unfortunate man whom God had put in their power, they could not expect their own sins to be forgiven by their heavenly Father. The young emperor, who was flattered by all, was obliged this once to hear the voice of truth from the lips of a poor monk. When afterwards the emperor asked him, what personal favour he wished for, he answered: "I have nothing else to request of you, except that you would not trifle with the salvation of your own soul; for though you are an emperor, you will die like any other man, appear before the divine judgment-seat, and give an account of your deeds, good and bad." The emperor burst into tears, took off his crown, and besought Nilus to give him his blessing.

The prayers of Nilus were frequently solicited for the sick, either by themselves or their relations, especially for those who laboured under mental distempers, and were regarded as possessed by evil spirits. But he felt the temptation that threatened him, and shrunk from the reputation of a miracle-worker. On one occasion, a man who filled a distinguished military post brought him his son, who was in a state of severe suffering. Nilus replied to his request: "Believe, O man, that I have never asked God to give me the power of working miracles, or of casting out evil spirits; I only wish that I may obtain the forgiveness of my many sins, and freedom from the evil thoughts that torment me! Rather pray for me, that I may be freed from many evil spirits. For thy son has only one evil spirt, and this involuntarily; perhaps this affliction will serve for the salvation of his soul, either by purifying him from former sins, or preserving him against others." After the son had been restored to health, and the father wished to thank Nilus for his intercession, he answered: "God has healed thy son; I have done nothing towards it." The scholar of Nilus, who wrote his life, and has presented us with the spirit of his teacher in these words, says: "I will not recount great miracles performed by him, which have filled childish people and unbelievers

with astonishment; but I will narrate his toils and labours, for I know that in such things the great apostle placed his reputation."

At this time, Christian fellowship between the members of the Greek and Latin churches was interrupted by controversies respecting certain ecclesiastical usages, customs, and doctrines, on which a difference of opinion existed in the two communions. But Nilus was too deeply grounded in the divine word, not to regard the unity in Christ as higher than such differences, and the genuine spirit of Christian love raised him above these divisions. He was held in equal veneration by the members of both churches. Thus the abbot and monks of the renowned abbey on Mount Cassino invited him to celebrate mass in their church in his mother-tongue; 'in order,' as they said, 'that God might be all in all' (that is, that all might join in glorifying God in different languages and forms, and that all differences might be subordinated to the unity of communion in the divine life). At first Nilus declined the invitation, saying, "How can we (the Greeks) who have been humbled on account of our sins in all lands, sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" But at last he consented, in order that by so doing he might contribute to the promotion of Christian union. After the service, he entered into a conversation on the differences between the two churches. One point was, that in the Romish church it was customary to fast on Saturdays, but not in the Greek. Nilus answered the question proposed to him respecting it nearly in the words of the Apostle Paul: "Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let him which eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest thy brother? Whether, therefore, ye eat or fast, do all to the glory of God." After stating the reasons which induced the Greeks not to fast on the seventh day, he added: "Yet let us desist from empty talk; for fasting is in itself nothing bad; let us say with the apostle: 'Meat commendeth us not to God.' (1 Cor. viii. 8.) If the poor Jews would only honour the Crucified as their Lord, and fast also on Sundays, it would not matter to me." Upon this, the rest said to him: "Is it, then, no sin to fast on Saturdays?" He answered: "Everything depends not on what is external, but on the direction of the heart towards God.

Everything that is done for God's sake is something good." And he endeavoured to show them that men might be led to a difference in outward practices by the difference in their points of view, and might agree with one another in all the essentials of the faith.

Nilus heard that the governor of Gaeta designed, after his death, to bring his bones into the city, and to inter them there, since he regarded the relics of the holy man as a safeguard for the town. But his humility could not endure the thought that such honour should be paid to him, which it was then customary to show to the saints; he preferred that no one should know where he was buried. He took leave of his mourning scholars and friends, his monks, saying to them: "Be not troubled, fathers and brethren, for I am going to prepare a place and a convent, where all my brethren and all my scattered children will assemble." He meant probably the rest of heaven, in which he hoped to meet again with all his friends. He then mounted his horse, and took the road to Rome. When he came on his way to Frascati (Tusculum), he entered the small convent of St. Agatha, and said: "Here is my final resting-place." Many friends and persons of rank invited him to come to Rome, even if only to perform his devotions at the tombs of the two first apostles; but he answered them: "Whoever has faith only as a grain of mustard-seed, can even in this spot honour the memory of the two apostles. I am come to this little place for no other reason but to die."

Gregory, an overbearing, hard-hearted man, the governor of the district in which the convent was situated, when he understood that the venerable man had taken up his abode there, was very much affected. He came to him, fell at his feet, and said: "O servant of the most high God, I do not deserve, on account of my many sins, that thou shouldst come under my roof. But since thou hast preferred sinners to the righteous, according to the example of thy Lord and Master, thou canst command my house and castle, and all my possessions which thou seest. If thou desirest anything, only express it." Nilus answered: "The Lord bless thee and thine, with thy whole house, and the whole place. Only grant me and mine a small piece of ground in thy territory, that we find a resting-place, and may pray to God for the

forgiveness of our sins, and for thy salvation." Gregory was eager to fulfil the wish of Nilus. Perceiving his end was near, Nilus requested those that were with him, that after his death they would not delay his burial; that they would not inter him in the church, nor build any arch or other memorial for ornament over his grave; but if they wished to place some mark by which it might be known, to let it be a seat for wayfaring men, for such he had always been himself. For two days he lay stretched on his bed speechless, and with closed eyes; they only thought that they could perceive by certain signs that he was praying. When Gregory, the governor, heard of his state, he came in haste from his castle, with an experienced physician. He threw himself weeping upon Nilus, and exclaimed: "O father, father, why dost thou leave us so soon!" And after kissing his hands, he said: "Behold! now thou longer hinderest me from kissing thy hands as thou usedst to do, when thou saidst, 'I am no bishop, no priest, no deacon, but only a poor old man; why, then, dost thou wish to kiss my hands?'" While saying this, he wept so loudly that all present were moved to tears. They brought Nilus, before any marks of death could be perceived upon him, into the church, for they knew that he would prefer closing his earthly life there. He fell into a gentle sleep without any marks of a death-struggle,—an end that corresponded with the whole course of his life. He died in the year 1005. He left behind him scholars who continued to labour in his spirit during a corrupt age.

12. *Otto, Bishop of Bamberg, the Apostle of Pomerania.*

As the close of the eleventh century was marked by a revival of Christianity, so missionaries were again sent forth by the awakened church. We wish to delineate the character of one to whom the Pomeranians were indebted for Christianity. We refer to Otto, bishop of Bamberg, who distinguished himself in his spiritual pastorate by fidelity and self-sacrificing love. He gladly subjected himself to deprivations, that he might be able to give more to the poor; to their benefit he most cheerfully devoted all the gifts that princes and nobles, far or near, sent him. Once during a fast, when fish were very dear, an expensive fish was brought

to his table: he said to his steward: "God forbid that poor Otto should devour so much gold to-day. Take this expensive fish to my Saviour, who is dearer to me than I am to myself. Take it hence to some one whom you may find on a sick bed. For me who am in health, bread is enough." On another occasion a costly fur was sent to him with a request that he would wear it as a memento of the giver. But he returned it, saying "that since this gift was a proof of peculiar love, he was anxious in remembrance of him who had shown him such love, that the gift should be preserved safe and uninjured, where neither moth nor rust can consume, nor thieves break through and steal." In these words he refers to our Lord's saying, respecting laying up treasure in heaven. The bishop kept an exact register of all the sick persons in the town, those suffering from lameness, leprosy, or cancer, with an exact account of the nature of each complaint and of its duration. He made use of these memoranda, in order to send relief to all through his steward, according to their particular necessities. He now said to one of his servants: "Take this beautiful and expensive fur-cloak and carry it to that lame bed-ridden person, whose body is covered with sores." This was a diseased man whom he called by name, an object of disgust to the whole neighbourhood. In a time of great scarcity, numbers of the poor were saved by his love, which was ready to make any sacrifice. It was quite befitting a man whose heart so glowed with love that he should testify of the Saviour to those who had never before heard of him.

A bishop Bernard, of Spanish origin, came to see him. This person, who on account of certain disputes could not enter on the bishopric to which he had been nominated, felt impelled to travel with his chaplain to the Slavonic tribes, who at that time inhabited Pomerania. He possessed genuine missionary zeal, only it was not accompanied with an equal measure of prudence. Accustomed to a strict ascetic life, he went barefoot in the garb of a hermit. He believed that in order to accomplish the missionary work, according to the mind of Christ and the example of the apostles, the directions given by our Lord, in Matt. 9, 10, must be observed to the letter. We here find the false use of Scripture, by which, with the best intentions, much injury is often done, if the wisdom of the serpent is not combined

with the innocence of the dove. It is of importance to distinguish what the Lord has laid down as a universal law for all ages, and what he says in reference to particular relations as they were determined by the circumstances under which he spoke. As to injunctions of the latter class, our Lord, under different relations, would have spoken differently, and hence a literal observance of such injunctions, under relations totally different, would be entirely to contravene the will of Christ; in such a case we should do what, under those circumstances, Christ himself would not have done, nor have commanded his disciples to do. In order to follow the intention of Christ correctly, we must extract the universal law contained in such particular injunctions.

Here this Spaniard entirely mistook Christ's meaning. The apostles were to prove, by acting agreeably to Christ's directions, their confidence in God, whose words they were commissioned to announce. If they came to a place where they found susceptible souls who gave them bread for their bodies, in return for the bread of spiritual life (Luke xxii. 35), they were to be satisfied with what every one set before them according to their ability. That they did not provide themselves with every thing necessary for travelling. contributed to expedite and lighten their journeys. But Bernard had to begin his missionary labours under totally different circumstances. The inhabitants, at that time, of Pomerania, were an opulent, lively people, abounding in all the gifts of nature, among whom there were no poor or beggars. They knew only priests who appeared in riches and splendor; so that poverty was looked upon as quite unworthy of the priesthood: from the manner in which Bernard made his appearance among them, they could only regard him as a mendicant, and impute to him nothing better than self-interested views. He did not understand that it became the genuine missionary to enter into the relations and the stand-point of the persons whom he had to conduct to the gospel, to become all things to all men. Among the Christian nations of those times among whom a sense of sin had been developed by the discipline of the law, a person who appeared among them like Bernard, as a strict monk, would gain great reverence. But it was very different with the pagan Pomeranians. When Paul in Rom. vii. says of himself: "I was alive without the law;" he marks a

peculiar stand-point of development among individuals and nations in general, where man carries sin in his bosom, as in a slumber or dead, where neither the consciousness of the law, nor consequently of sin, has become vivid: evil and good are yet side by side in the undeveloped germ. The man is still hidden and unknown to himself; as yet he has not been placed upon any such level which would make him experience the conflict between flesh and spirit, which would make him sensible of the chasm between the requirements of the law and his own desires. Many emotions of goodness may be felt in such a state; many outbreaks, sometimes of the good, sometimes of the evil nature, will occur, or both be mingled together at the same time. Man may instinctively accomplish much that is good following the good impulses of his heart; there may be hospitality, the domestic affections, the love of country, and much that makes men amiable, as long as the natural selfishness is not touched, nor put to any severe test. But he is yet far from knowing the nature of the law, or the nature of sin. On such a stand-point the Pomeranians were at that time, and therefore the internal conflicts and state of contrition in which the ascetic life and monasticism originated, must have appeared altogether strange to them, and Bernard's mode of life must have been quite unintelligible. He must have excited their contempt, and they could only regard him as a crack-brained enthusiast. Yet they did him no injury till, by an inconsiderate act of enthusiastic zeal, he roused the wrath of the ignorant heathen, by destroying an idolatrous image before anything had been done to destroy idolatry in their hearts—for which as there had been no preparation, this act was quite useless and could only embitter their minds. Bernard was obliged to go on board a vessel, and was banished from the country.

He repaired to Bamberg, and endeavoured to gain Bishop Otto for the work in which he himself had not been able to do anything, not having set about it in the right way. His example served as a warning to the bishop not to commit a similar fault. Hence, much as he was attached to the monastic system, he refrained from everything of the kind on his entrance into Pomerania. He resolved, on the contrary, to appear in all the splendor of his episcopal dignity. He not only furnished himself abundantly with everything which he and his followers required for their

daily maintenance, but also took with him rich articles of dress and other things as presents for persons of the higher class, besides all the requisite ecclesiastical vessels, in order to give them plain evidence that he did not come to gain anything, but rather to give away what was his own, and to bring that to a foreign people which he esteemed highest and best.

In the year 1124, Otto set out on his missionary travels. After many happy results, though not without several unsuccessful attempts, and overcoming some great dangers, he came to the capital city, Stettin. Much depended on the reception he might meet with here. Many of the Pagans waited with intense expectation for the decision of their capital, and it seemed at first as if this would not be favourable. How commonly the lives of those who profess Christianity do it the greatest injury! That which was here known of the neighbouring Christian nations, who still were very far from being truly Christian, did not contribute to give a favourable idea of Christianity itself. But the people, who, as we have before remarked, were still in a condition, as it were, of happy childhood, were not yet acquainted with the evils through which man must pass in order to arrive at manhood. They knew nothing of the evils that accompany a commencing civilization, the beginning of mental culture from which man cannot remain exempt, who is not destined for an indolent life on earth in dull unconsciousness, but to exercise dominion over the world, as a being made in the image of God. As yet all the misery was unknown to them of the discord that man must experience in order to learn the corruption of his nature, and the only cure for it. Thus the inhabitants of Stettin were disposed to overvalue the advantages and prosperity of their situation, while they judged of the effects of Christianity only according to the appearances presented to superficial observation, as shown in the mass of its professors.

Otto, whose patience was not to be wearied out by the want of immediate success, spent several months at Stettin, and during that time acted in a manner best suited to silence those complaints against Christianity, by the example of his pious life, animated with the spirit of love. If these Pagans had heard of such vices prevailing among Christians, which accompanied the transition from barbarism to civilization,

and were still unknown to them by experience, Otto now showed them virtues which were equally unknown to them, on the stand-point of their instinctive well-disposed state of nature—specimens of that self-sacrificing love which are only to be met with where the selfishness of man has been overcome by the spirit of God. He redeemed, at his own expense, many captives, and after furnishing them with clothes and provisions, sent them back to their friends. But one occurrence in particular operated advantageously, by which the loving heart of the bishop became more generally known, and the hearts of the young were attracted towards him.

The wife of an opulent and respectable person in the town was a secret Christian, who, in her youth, had been taken away by force from a Christian country. She had always remained firmly attached to her faith, but had not ventured to profess it publicly among a heathen people. She was greatly rejoiced at the coming of the bishop, but never ventured publicly to express her feelings, and to become one of his adherents. It might, perhaps, be owing in part to her influence, that her two sons frequently visited ecclesiastics, and asked them questions respecting the Christian faith. The bishop availed himself of this to instruct them gradually in the leading truths of Christianity. At last they declared themselves convinced, and desirous of baptism. After they had been baptized, they remained eight days with the bishop, in order to spend with him the first week with proper devotion in their white baptismal dress; meanwhile, the mother heard of this before the time was gone by. Full of joy she sent to the bishop, to inform him that she wished to see him and her sons. He waited for her in the open air, sitting on the turf surrounded by his clergy, and at his feet were the youths in white baptismal garments. The sight of her sons in this dress made such an impression on their mother, who for so many years had concealed her Christianity that, overpowered by her feelings, she fell weeping on the ground. The bishop and ecclesiastics were startled, and hastened to raise the woman; they tried to calm her mind, for they imagined that it was the distress occasioned by the apostacy of her sons from the religion of their fathers, which had made so violent an impression upon her. But their views were quite changed as soon as the woman came to herself,

and could find words to express her feelings. Her first words were, "I bless Thee, Lord Jesus Christ, thou source of all hope and consolation, that I behold my sons consecrated in thy sacrament, and enlightened in thy divine truth;" then embracing and kissing her sons she added, "For thou knowest, my Lord Jesus Christ, that I have never ceased, in the secret recesses of my heart, for many years past, to commend them to thy mercy, and have besought Thee to do that for them which Thou hast done for me." And upon this she turned to the bishop and said, "Blessed be your coming to this town, for if you only stay here you will gain a large church for the Lord; only be not wearied out by long waiting. Behold! I myself, who stand before you, confess, by the assistance of Almighty God, and encouraged by your presence, venerable father, trusting also in the help of my children, that I am a Christian, which I have not hitherto ventured to express openly!" She then told her whole history. The bishop, deeply affected, thanked God for the wonderful methods of his grace, assured the woman of his cordial sympathy, spoke many encouraging words to support her faith, and gave her a valuable fur dress. When the eight days were past, and the newly baptized laid aside, as was customary, their white garments, the sign of the new garment of innocence, he presented them with beautiful costly clothes, and after administering the Holy Supper to them for the first time, dismissed them to their friends.

When the destruction of all the monuments of idolatry had been resolved upon, and this resolution had been carried into effect, there were many valuable things which they wished to give the bishop; but he would accept none of them, saying, "Far be it from us to wish to enrich ourselves at your expense. All such things, and far more beautiful ones, we have at home." But he was by no means inclined to consign everything to destruction which had formerly been used for idolatrous purposes. He well understood how to distinguish what is pure in itself from the abuse of it by the vain imaginations of men. He allowed the people to divide among themselves all that was obtained from the demolition of the idolatrous temples, after, according to the custom of the church in those times, it had been marked with the sign of the cross, and sprinkled with holy water. From Stettin, Otto's labours extended to other parts of the country; yet the founda-

tion of the Christian church was not laid by him in such a manner as defied all attempts to destroy it. Many things checked his influence on the minds of the people; he could only address them through an interpreter; there were also external political considerations, which influenced the conversion of a part of the people. Otto, on account of business connected with his episcopal office, was recalled to his diocese too early, before he was able to carry on the work further, and to establish it more firmly. The infection of one half of the country which still adhered to paganism, could easily react on those who were still weak in faith, in the other half where Christian churches had been founded. Under the deprivations to which the strict discipline of the church had subjected them, they might long with regret for the enjoyment of pagan pleasures, and the example of their heathen neighbours would serve to stimulate their desires. Yet in many hearts Otto had deposited an imperishable seed, from which a counteraction might spring up against the revived power of paganism. We may often notice in the history of missions, how a rapid, and, to a superficial dreamer, a very promising spread of Christianity has been succeeded by a rallying of the forces of heathenism, and the final victory of Christianity is not achieved till after a fresh conflict, which serves to separate the genuine and the spurious.

Otto would gladly have come earlier to the aid of the oppressed new church; but he was hindered for three years, by a variety of unfortunate events and of official business, from following the impulse of his heart, and could not fulfil his wishes till the spring of the year 1128. As he travelled by a different route from that of his first visit, he came first to the town of Demmin, where he found an old acquaintance in the governor. Here he also met with the Duke Wartislav, of Pomerania, whose heart he had won on his first missionary journey. He had just returned from a war with the neighbouring Slavonian tribes, in triumph and laden with spoils. Here a spectacle was presented to Otto which must have deeply moved his benevolent heart. The duke's army had taken a number of prisoners, who were to be divided with the rest of the booty. Among them were several of very weak, tender constitutions; husbands were threatened to be separated by lot from their wives—wives from their husbands—and parents from their children. First

of all, Otto succeeded with the duke in obtaining that the weakest should be set at liberty, and that relatives should not be separated from each other. But this did not satisfy him; he paid the ransom out of his own purse for many who were still Pagans, instructed them in Christianity, baptized them, and then sent them back to their friends. Whitsuntide was chosen for the purpose of holding a diet, on which the consent of the different orders in the state was to be solicited, that churches might be founded in all parts of the country.

The town of Usedom, in which the seeds of Christianity had been sown by some priests who had been left there by Otto on his first missionary tour, was selected to be the place for holding the diet. Of those who assembled on this occasion some had always remained Pagans, others had been converted before by Otto, but during his absence had relapsed into heathenism. The duke introduced the bishop to the assembly, who were struck with awe at his whole demeanour. He urged upon them the appearance of this individual among them, took away the ground of excuse they formerly made for rejecting Christianity—that the publishers of this religion were poor despicable people, in whom no confidence could be placed, and who only made use of it to get a living. Here they saw one of the first members of the German empire, who at home had an abundance of everything, possessed much gold, silver, and many jewels—a person, therefore, on whom no suspicion could be thrown, that he sought anything for himself; so far from that, he had left a life full of honour and comfort, and had made use of his own property, in order to communicate to them that which he esteemed of the highest value. These words paved the way to their hearts for the bishop's address. The festival of Whitsuntide gave him an opportunity to speak of the grace and goodness of God, of the forgiveness of sins, of the communication of the Holy Spirit to the redeemed, and of spiritual gifts. His words made a deep impression: the lapsed testified their penitence, and allowed themselves to be readmitted into the church by the bishop; those who had always been heathens were instructed in Christianity and baptized. By a decree of the diet, the free publication of the gospel in all places was permitted.

Bishop Otto was distinguished by an union of mildness and firmness. We have seen how those articles which had been employed in idolatrous worship were not devoted to destruction, but allowed to serve a better purpose. But he acted differently under other circumstances. When he was occupied in his mission at Gutzkow, the people requested that he would spare a beautiful new temple which was considered to be a great ornament to the town. In vain great presents were offered to gain his consent. At last they entreated that he would convert the temple into a Christian church. But the bishop believed that if he allowed this, a mixture of paganism and Christianity was to be apprehended. In order to show the people that for their own best interests he could not comply with their wishes, he made use of the following illustration:—"Would you indeed," he said to them, "sow wheat over thorns and thistles? I trow not! As you, therefore, first of all root out the thorns and thistles from your fields, in order that the seed you sow may bring forth an abundant crop, so must I take away from your midst all that belongs to idolatry, the thorns for my sermons, that your hearts may bring forth fruit unto everlasting life, from the good seed of the gospel." And by daily reiterated representations he at last conquered the opposition of the people, so that they destroyed with their own hands the temple and the idols. But, on the other hand, to indemnify the people for the loss of the temple, Otto zealously promoted the building of a magnificent church. And as soon as the chancel and the altar were completed, without waiting for the completion of the church, he prepared a splendid festival for its consecration, a true popular festival, which would eclipse in glory all their former pagan festivals. When all classes, high and low, were assembled for the occasion, and after all the ceremonies ordained by the church had been performed, he explained to the assembly the symbolic meaning of the ceremony, and made use of it to direct their attention from the outward to the inward, and to warn them against placing Christianity in mere externals. He tried to make it evident to the people that what had been outwardly performed related to the internal state of the soul, which would become a temple of the Holy Spirit if Christ dwelt in it by faith. He then turned to Mizlav, the noble who governed in this part of Pomerania, and who was baptized

by him on the day the diet was held at Usedom. "You are," he said to him, "my beloved son, the true house of God. You must, to-day, consecrate yourself to your God, the Almighty Creator, in order to be freed from all other spirits which have taken possession of your heart, and to be his sole property and dwelling-place. Therefore, my beloved son, do not prevent the completion of this consecration, for it is of no use that this visible house of God is consecrated externally, unless that which is signified by this consecration takes effect in your inner man." As the bishop believed that it might be inferred from Mizlav's expressions that he had been touched by the influences of the Holy Spirit, he added: "You have in part, my son, begun to be the house of God. Strive that you may be so altogether. Already you have forsaken the worship of idols for the gospel, and have received the grace of baptism. Now you must adorn the faith with the works of piety; you must renounce robbery, murder, oppression, and deceit. It must become the rule of your life. What you do not wish other persons to do to you, that you must not do to them. Set all your prisoners at liberty; and if you do not give all their freedom, at least manumit those who are Christians, who hold the same faith with yourself." By way of self-defence, Mizlav replied: "It is rather hard for me, O father, to give liberty to all; for some of them are deeply in debt to me." The bishop replied: "The word of the Lord tells us that we must forgive our debtors, in order that we may be forgiven. Thus you will obtain a certain acquittal for all your debts from the Lord, if you forgive your debtors in his name." Mizlav then said, with a deep sigh: "Behold, in the name of the Lord Jesus, I give all their freedom, that according to your word this consecration may be completed in me to-day, with the forgiveness of all my sins." And calling out to the servant to whom he had committed the oversight of the prisoners, he commanded him to set them all at liberty. Yet he made one exception of which no one knew anything. He was the son of a very respectable man from Denmark. His father, who owed Mizlav a large sum of money, had left him behind as a pledge. He languished, heavily chained, in an underground prison. By a singular providence this also came to light.

All persons were filled with joy at Mizlav's conduct. When

the clergy were exerting themselves to prepare everything that was requisite for the completion of the solemnity, one of the church vessels was missing. As an ecclesiastic was hurrying about in quest of it, he came near that underground prison, and the youth confined there succeeded in attracting his attention. He called to him and entreated him to effect his release through the bishop. When the bishop heard of this he was moved with sympathy, but did not venture to ask this favour of one who had already granted him so much. He had recourse to earnest prayer, and when he rose from his knees, he called his priests to him and requested them to take Mizlav aside, and with all moderation to prefer this request. It cost him a hard struggle to make this sacrifice, and to give up so large a sum of money. Yet after conflicting with himself, he yielded. He went with tears to the bishop, and said to him: "Yes; for the sake of my Lord Jesus, if he require it, I will surrender my body and all I have in devout obedience." The example of this powerful noble roused all the rest to emulation, so that every one, according to his station, sought to evince the genuineness of his conversion by his works and the sacrifices he made.

Bishop Otto would with joy have sacrificed his life for the love of Christ. He longed for the crown of martyrdom, and his zeal carried him beyond the bounds of moderation. With anxious looks he regarded the Island of Rugen, distant about one day's sail, and an earnest desire arose in his mind to go forth as a witness of the faith among the warlike inhabitants of this island, who were a tribe still zealously attached to paganism. But here death threatened him: the islanders vowed death to the enemy of their gods, should he venture to come to their shores. But imminent danger could not keep back Bishop Otto. He would gladly meet death for the cause of Christ. The duke of Pomerania and all Otto's friends tried in vain to detain him; in vain they represented to him that his life might be preserved for greater usefulness. He called this little faith, saying that a man must seal the Christian faith rather by works than by words. "How could the publishers of the gospel," he exclaimed, "expect the reward of eternal life, if they were afraid to give up the present? And supposing that we were all obliged to die for Christ's sake, in publishing the gospel among the heathen, would not

our testimony be so much the more glorious, since it would be sealed by our blood?" As endeavours were made to prevent by every method his departure to Rugen, he meditated some way of going unobserved, and it was therefore needful to watch his movements closely. Yet while most persons censured Otto's glowing zeal as not sufficiently discreet, one of his priests, Ulrich, felt himself impelled to engage in a work for which he himself was ready to sacrifice his own life. After receiving the bishop's blessing, he went on board a vessel, and took with him all that was necessary for celebrating mass. But he had to combat incessantly with wind and weather; three times he was obliged to give way to the fury of the elements; and as soon as the violence of the storm was somewhat abated, he again made the attempt to pass over to the Isle of Rugen. Thus he spent seven days in conflict with the tempest and waves, and several times was in great danger. But as the weather continued unfavourable, with intermission, and the vessel had sprung a leak, at last the bishop himself considered this a token of the divine will against the undertaking, and recalled his beloved priest home from the shore, while he thanked God that he had granted him such great faith and resolution. The manner in which the bishop's project was freely discussed by his clergy, and in which he received their censure, shows the beautiful relation which here existed between the superior and his subordinates; the frankness of the clergy, the gentleness and humility of the bishop. At their common meal the clergy began, in the presence of their bishop, to joke about Ulrich's voyage. "Who," said they, "would have been guilty of murder if he had lost his life?" Then another who had always been strongly opposed to the undertaking, said, "Who could with greater justice be chargeable with the guilt of murder than he who moved him to rush into such danger?" But the bishop, not taking this amiss, endeavoured to vindicate himself against the imputation. "When the Lord," he said, "sent his disciples as sheep among wolves, and they were torn in pieces by the wolves, who was then guilty of their death? Was it the Lord?" This, indeed, was one of those applications of Christ's words in which, as in an example we before adduced, due regard was not paid to their original connection and design. Christ did not expose his disciples to certain death among the wolves,

but enjoined on them to unite the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove, in order to lessen the danger that threatened them from the wolves. He did not order them to sacrifice their life without an object and advantage, but to preserve it in and for their calling, and only to resign it when fidelity to that calling required. A correct understanding of the injunctions which Christ gave his apostles in reference to the duties of their calling, would rather have withheld the pious bishop from yielding to the impulse of that enthusiastic zeal.

There was another instance in which Otto justly ventured everything in order to obtain a victory for the gospel; for here he might expect a happy result if he dreaded no danger, while trusting in the Lord. It was the continuation of the work he had begun, in which he was obliged to risk his life, relying on the protection of him to whose service his life was consecrated. The prosperity of the church in Pomerania depended entirely on determining whether paganism should retain the predominance or Christianity triumph in Stettin, the capital city. The power of paganism had revived there; those priests who had received baptism on Otto's first visit remained heathens in heart, and they had lost too much by the change of religion to be able easily to suppress their vexation. It was not difficult for them to find means to work upon the mass of the rude people. An epidemic that spread among both men and beasts, of which many died, was regarded by them as a sign of the wrath of the gods, and they could easily induce the deluded multitude to believe this. Their influence succeeded so far that the people banded together to demolish a Christian church. The most alarming representations were now circulated of the fury of the Pagans in Stettin, and of the danger that threatened all who ventured to come forward on behalf of Christianity. Bishop Otto was not alarmed, but his clergy had not equal strength of faith, and fear held them back. As Otto could not overcome their opposition by his remonstrances, he resolved to act alone in the matter; after spending a day in solitude, he stole away in the dark when evening came on, with his mass-book and the sacramental cup. The clergy were first aware of his leaving when they wished to call him to the early morning service. Seized with shame and anxiety for their spiritual

father they hastened after him, and obliged him to return; but the next morning they set out with him and sailed for Stettin.

It was not yet known how the seed scattered by Otto, which seemed to have perished, remained and germinated in secret. A reaction of the Christianity already deeply implanted in the minds of many, at last effected, under a combination of favourable circumstances, its victory over paganism. It appeared that Christianity had gained an entrance among the better educated, higher class of persons. On them the heathen priests could not so easily operate, and among them reviving paganism could find no point of connection; only they did not venture to come forward against the clamour of the raging multitude. But there were those who had been affected by Christianity without having altogether detached themselves from paganism; in their minds a conflict was going on between Christianity and paganism, and it depended on many influences what would be the final result. In the popular uproar which had for its object the demolition of a church, it so happened that one of the persons who took an active part in it, while aiming a blow with a hammer, was suddenly seized as with a fainting-fit. His hand was paralyzed. He let the hammer drop, and fell down himself from the ladder. He probably belonged to the number of apostate Christians. The faith which was not entirely expelled from his soul perhaps again asserted its power; hence a mental conflict arose, terror seized him and palsied his hand when he attempted to join in destroying the temple dedicated to the God of the Christians. Still paganism swayed his soul. He could not renounce the worship of his ancient gods; but at the same time the God whose temple they wished to demolish, appeared to him as a being against whom no human power could avail, as it was proved, and hence he advised, in order to be on good terms with all the divinities, that near this church altars should be erected to the gods of the country. This was often a bridge which led from heathenism to Christianity, when the Pagans began first of all to acknowledge the God of the Christians as a powerful deity, together with their ancient gods. By all these favourable circumstances, preparation was made for Otto's renewed labours in Stettin, and he found here a

zealous friend who by the experiences of his own life had become a courageous professor of the gospel,—that Wittstock of whose memorable courage we have already spoken.

But Otto knew nothing of all these occurrences. He went to meet the threatening danger, not in dependence on human means and the co-operation of circumstances, but confiding in God alone and with resignation to his will, and regarding his life as of little value compared with the holy cause that he served. At first, he found a place of refuge with his associates in the church built before the city. When their arrival was known among the people, a band of armed men led on by the priests collected round this church; they threatened destruction to the church and death to all who were assembled in it. Here it was shown how the power of faith gives true presence of mind and with it the requisite prudence in those decisive moments when everything for the future depends on right action at the time. Had Otto been alarmed and shown signs of fear, his furious adversaries would have proceeded further in their attempts; but by his calm confidence and courage their rage was overpowered. After commending himself and his friends in prayer to God, he went forth in his episcopal robes in the midst of his clergy, who bore before him the crucifix and relics, singing psalms and hymns. The calmness of the bishop, who ventured thus to despise the fury of the raging mob, and a spectacle so adapted to inspire awe, confounded the multitude. Silence followed; this was taken advantage of by the more considerate or by those who favoured Christianity to calm the minds of the rest. The priests were told that they ought to defend their cause, not by force, but by argument. Gradually the multitude dispersed. This happened on a Friday. Otto made use of the next day to prepare himself, by prayer and fasting, for coming events.

Wittstock, who since his wonderful deliverance had never ceased to testify of the Lord to whom he owed so much, was still more animated by the arrival of his beloved spiritual father. He brought his friends and relations to the bishop, and encouraged him not to relax in the conflict. He assured him of victory, and concerted with him on what was to be done.

On the Sunday, Otto, after performing mass, was con-

ducted by Wittstock to the market-place. He mounted the steps from which heralds and other official persons were wont to address the people. After Wittstock had requested silence by words and signs, Otto began to speak. The greater part listened quietly and attentively. But now a stout priest of portly appearance and great bodily strength pressed forward, and with his sonorous voice overpowered Otto and his interpreter; he tried to inflame the fury of the Pagans against the enemy of their gods, and demanded of them to make use of this opportunity for taking vengeance. Lances were raised, but no one ventured to do anything against a man who exhibited such confidence of faith. There was an impression of the power of the divine on the wild multitude and the quiet superiority of calm courage over raging passion, which was aided by the circumstance that a part of those who had assembled had not entirely overcome their earlier impressions of Christianity. Otto availed himself of the favourable impression on their minds; and proceeded, with the company of believers collected around him, to that church in which the pagan altar had been erected. He consecrated the church afresh, and repaired at his own cost the injuries that had been done to it.

The next day a general meeting of the people was held for the purpose of deciding what course they should adopt in relation to religious matters. It lasted from early in the morning to midnight. Some came forward who described in glowing colours to the assembly all that had happened on the preceding day, in the light of the miraculous, as it had appeared to themselves, and testified with enthusiasm of the active self-sacrificing love of the bishop. Among these persons, Wittstock occupied the first place. The decision was adopted that Christianity should be introduced and everything that belonged to paganism should be destroyed; on the same night, Wittstock hastened to inform the bishop of all that had taken place. The next morning he rose early to thank God, by the celebration of the mass, for what his grace had effected; he also called a meeting of the citizens, and spoke to them words of exhortation which made a deep impression. Many of the lapsed expressed their desire to be readmitted to the communion of the church. Thus the victory of Christianity was decided. Otto, far from shrinking

from martyrdom, would willingly have extended his labours to the Isle of Rugen if he had not been called back by the concerns of his own diocese in the year 1128.

13. *Raimund Lull.*

We close these sketches, selected from the missionary history of the Middle Ages, with the delineation of an extraordinary man who was awakened to the higher life in a very peculiar manner,—a man possessed of noble qualities and mental endowments which seldom meet in one person, and in whom everything was adorned by the glow of holy love—Raimund Lull. We see in his example how much greatness may be dormant in a human being till, by a ray of light from on high beaming upon him, it is brought into conscious activity. Various talents are required for missionary labour which must be animated by the Holy Spirit; nor can every man do everything under all circumstances. Indeed, the greatest effect proceeds from the power of the simple gospel, from the demonstration of the Spirit and of power which accompanies these fundamental truths in the hearts of men. But among nations possessing scientific culture, where their culture has hitherto been in the service of a religious standpoint opposed to Christianity, that science which does homage to the cross and serves the spirit of the gospel, may be an important instrument in effecting the transition from the former stand-point to Christianity: the example of a Paul is a witness to this, and many examples in the first ages of the church also witness to it. And in such a connection this man of great mental power, Raimund Lull, is to be mentioned, who in all his deep thinking kept this especially in view, how he might find means to bring reason entirely into the obedience of the faith. For the missions of our age, his words are well deserving of meditation.

Raimund Lull was born in the Island of Majorca, in the year 1236. Till his thirtieth year he led a life estranged from all higher aspirations, in the court of the king of the Balearic Islands. And after his marriage, he continued to indulge in pleasure with a violation of matrimonial fidelity. His poetry was devoted to sensual love. In his work on divine contemplation, he mourns over the lost first part of

his life. "When we see, O God, the trees first of all bring forth leaves and twigs, and then blossoms, and after the blossoms fruit, it intimates that we should first of all give the signs of a good life, then our good works must be seen, as we see the blossoms follow the leaves; and then the advantages which our good works bring must show themselves, as fruits proceed from the blossoms. If trees are beautiful and good because they bring forth twigs, leaves, blossoms, and fruit, how much more beautiful and better are men when they perform works of love, and glorify their Lord, Creator, and God. Trees and plants follow the law of their destiny in what they do, when step by step they bring forth twigs, leaves, flowers, and fruit; but it is not so with us, for we do the contrary: as we see every day that we do that in youth which we ought to do in old age; and do that in old age which we ought to do in youth. I see, O Lord, that the trees every year bring forth flowers and fruits by which men are refreshed and nourished; but it is not so with me, a sinner. For thirty years I have borne no fruit in the world; yea, rather I have injured my neighbours and friends. If, therefore, the tree which is destitute of reason brings forth more fruit than I have done, I must be deeply ashamed, and acknowledge my great guilt. To thee, O Lord my God, I, thy servant, return many thanks, because I perceive a great difference between the works which I used to perform in my youth and those which I now perform in my declining age. For as then all my works were done in sin and in fellowship with sin, so now, I hope, by thy grace, my works, contemplations, and wishes relate to glorifying thee."* But the feelings of Christian piety which, as they moved his age and

* Quotidie video, Domine, homines senes facere id, quod deberent facere juvenes, et juvenes facere id, quod deberent facere senes; et quotidie video homines facere mane id, quod deberent facere meridie, et vesperi id, quod deberent facere mane; sed de arboribus et herbis non est ita, quia in quolibet tempore anni, et in qualibet hora diei et noctis faciunt ordinate omne id quod faciunt. Video, Domine, quod arbores omni anno producant flores et fructus, per quos lætificantur et sustentantur homines; sed non est ita de me peccatore, quia triginta annis non fui in hoc mundo fructuosus, imo fui nocivus meis vicinis et meis amicis: igitur, cum arbor, quæ est sine intellectu et ratione, sit fructuosior quam ego fuerim, valde verecundor et me reputo valde culpabilem.—Raymundus Lullus, *Lib. Contempl. in Deum,* cap. 107, § 5, 6, tom. ix. p. 237.

people, were communicated to him by education, had still not lost all their influence over him, though mingled with predominant sensuality. We here see, as in many other instances, the great blessing of pious influences on the development of childhood, which, in a life carried away by sensual desires and passions, may revive again at last. So it was with Raimond Lull. From these influences the opposition proceeded against that which had hitherto animated his life. When one night he sat on his bed and wished to make an amatory poem, the image of the crucified Saviour was presented to his eyes, and made so powerful an impression upon him that he could think no more of his love-song. He wished not to give it up; he began again, but that image came before him again still more vividly, and at last he was obliged to desist from his intended composition. Day and night that image floated before him, and he could not shake off the impression. We must, indeed, acknowledge, when we consider the manifold dealings of divine grace with the souls of men, whom divine love follows in order to redeem, that although the power of the divine over the heart is always the same, yet the manner in which the impression of it is rendered conscious depends on the peculiarity of the mental constitution, and the temperament; and thus conversion is effected either more gradually, or at once by a great revolution. In the case of Raimund Lull, the man of poetic spirit, in whom imagination predominated, in whom the power of the divine came forth in opposition to the earlier ruling power of sensual passion, the divine power of the impression which the image of Christ made on his heart was represented in the form of a vision. He received it as an admonition that he should withdraw himself from the world, and devote himself entirely to the service of Christ. But now the question arose in his mind,—How shall I turn away from my hitherto impure life to so holy a calling? This thought gave him no rest at night. Then he said to himself: "Christ is so gentle, and patient, and merciful; he calls all sinners to him, and will not reject me, notwithstanding my sins." Thus he became certain that it was God's will that he should forsake the world, and devote himself with his whole heart to the service of Christ.

Having resolved to dedicate himself wholly to the Lord's

service, he proceeded to consider in what way this resolution might be best carried out, and he came to the firm conviction that he could engage in no employment more pleasing to the Saviour than devoting his life to the publication of the gospel. His attention was directed particularly to the Saracens, whom it had been in vain attempted to subdue entirely in the Crusades by the power of the sword. But now the doubt forcibly struck him, how could he, an uninstructed layman, be fit for such a work? While he was filled with deep sorrow on this account, the thought occurred to him to write a book which might serve to prove the truth in opposition to all the errors of unbelievers. He believed that he could here recognize a divine call (and it was important for the direction which from that time his deep reflectiveness took), to prove the agreement between the truth of revealed religion and that which is founded in the nature of the human mind. The heavenly power of love, by which he was now seized, gave a new impulse to his thinking. Yet again he asked himself, supposing he should succeed in writing such a book, what good would this do to the Saracens, who only understood the Arabic language. And thus the plan arose in his mind to apply to the pope and the Christian princes, that they would found institutions in the convents for learning the Arabic and the other languages which prevailed among nations that were not Christian. The study of languages ought to serve the work of divine grace. If such institutions were founded (Raimund Lull thought), in which instruction in the different languages could be imparted, then missionaries could go forth into all parts. On the day following he repaired to a neighbouring church, and besought the Lord with many tears that he who had infused this thought into his mind might enable him to complete that work for the vindication of Christianity; to bring about the establishment of these missionary schools for languages; and lastly, to devote his life to the Lord's cause. This happened at the beginning of the month of July; but the higher life in Raimund Lull had still to go through many fluctuations before it could reach a confirmed state. Old habits were still too powerful in him, and so it came to pass, that for three months he proceeded no further in realizing these plans, which had interested him so deeply. Then came the fourth

of October, the feast of St. Francis, and he heard a bishop preach in the church of the Franciscans, at Majorca, on St. Francis' renunciation of the world. This discourse was the means of reviving afresh what had been lying dormant in his soul. He resolved to follow the example of that man immediately; he sold his possessions, reserving only so much as would afford the means of support to his wife and children. He surrendered himself wholly to the Lord Christ, and forsook his home with the resolution not to return thither again. First of all he visited several churches, in which he called upon God for his blessing in the execution of those plans which had so forcibly occupied his thoughts.

He then wished to visit Paris, in order, by pursuing his studies at the university, to acquire the knowledge which was requisite for accomplishing his plans. But he was withheld from effecting this intention through the influence of his relations and friends. He remained, therefore, in Majorca, and began his studies there. He bought a Saracen, by whom he was instructed in Arabic. The highest point of interest in his researches was the vindication of the truths of religion. If he succeeded, he thought, in refuting the objections of learned Mohammedans against Christianity, and if they could not refute the arguments for the Christian truth which he brought forward, they must, of course, be converted to Christianity; but in this expectation he trusted too much to the power of his arguments. The promotion of missions was a main object with him, and to this the learning of languages would contribute. He obtained from James, king of Majorca and Minorca, that on the former of these islands a convent should be founded, on the express condition that thirteen Franciscans in it should always be instructed in the Arabic language, in order to labour as missionaries among the Saracens. In the year 1286 he visited Rome, in order to gain the sanction of Pope Honorius IV., that in all countries such missionary schools should be attached to the convents; but he found the pope no longer living, and the papal chair vacant. And when he visited Rome a second time for the same object, he was equally unsuccessful. How great his desire was that schools for language in aid of missions should be established among the monks, appears from those words in which he laments that with all the pious zeal

that existed, so little was done for the conversion of unbelievers. "I daily see," he says, in his work on the contemplation of God, "pious monks, Franciscans, Dominicans, and others, daily fatiguing themselves with our defects and sins, while they endeavour, by their sermons, day and night, to draw us away from sin, to excite to goodness, and to establish love amongst us. I see monks taking up their abode in lonely, wild districts, in order not to tempted by the sins which prevail among us; I see them plough and cultivate the land in order to maintain themselves and the poor; and I see them rise in the middle of the night to sing thy praises, O Lord! We see hermits fleeing from the vanities of this world, withdrawn to mountains and uninhabited places, live on herbs, renounce all the pleasures of this world, and spend their whole life in loving and praising thee, O Lord, in praying to thee, and in meditating on thy goodness and holiness. I see monks and nuns forsake the world, that they may be partakers of glory in another; and although they endure in their bodies much pain and toil, yet they escape much anxiety and distress which we people of the world suffer in our souls, because we are in the world, and love the world. But I look round carefully, and as far as I have examined, I find scarcely any one who out of love to thee, O Lord, is ready to suffer martyrdom, as thou hast suffered for us. It appears to me agreeable to reason, if an ordinance to that effect could be obtained, that the monks should learn various languages, that they might be able to go out and surrender their lives in love to thee. Since in our day we see many monks of holy lives and great wisdom, I pray thee, O Lord, that I may also see in my day that they form institutions in order to learn various languages, and to be able to preach to unbelievers. O Lord of glory, if that blessed day should ever be in which I might see thy holy monks so influenced by zeal to glorify thee as to go into foreign lands in order to testify of thy Holy Trinity, of thy blessed incarnation, and of thy bitter sufferings, that would be a glorious day, a day on which that glow of devotion would return with which the holy apostles met death for their Lord Jesus Christ!"

As Raimund Lull was not able to form, as he wished, any association for this holy undertaking, he felt himself impelled to go all alone among unbelievers, and in the year 1287, he

went to Genoa, in order to sail from that place to North Africa. As already so much had been heard of the remarkable change that had passed over him, of his ardent zeal for the conversion of unbelievers, and of his new and (in his own opinion) promising method of conversion, his undertaking awakened great expectations. But he had still many a hard conflict to sustain; the natural man still asserted its power over him. That imagination which was filled with transporting images by the holy cause that inspired him, in which the glory of his inner life was reflected, could also be stirred up by the impulses of the natural man, and receive into itself images of another kind; the fear of the natural man could be reflected in it. It could operate in a variety of ways on Raimund Lull, according as it stood in the service of a higher or lower power. Already the vessel in which Raimund was to embark, was ready for sailing; his books were put on board, when his fervent imaginative faculty depicted to him the fate which he might experience among the Mohammedans (whether a torturing death or imprisonment for life) in so vivid and terrific a manner, that he could not summon courage to go on board. Yet when the vessel had sailed, the reproaches of his conscience took possession of him for being unfaithful to the holy resolutions God had incited him to make, and for having given such offence to believers in Genoa. A severe illness was the consequence of this inward conflict. While he had to suffer so much in mind and body, it happened that he heard that a ship had entered the port, which was on the point of sailing to Tunis. Although he seemed more dead than alive, he allowed himself to be carried on board with his books. As his friends considered it impossible that in such a state he could bear the voyage, they fetched him back full of concern. Yet with all the care taken of his body, his state of health showed no symptoms of improvement; for the root of the evil lay in his soul. When, some time after, he heard of a second ship bound for Tunis, nothing could keep him back from being taken to it. And when the ship had set sail, he felt relieved from the burden that oppressed his conscience: for he found himself in his element; he had entered on the fulfilment of his calling, which he felt confident was a divine one. With the health of the soul, that of the body returned. The writer who has given us

these particulars respecting Raimund Lull, thus expresses himself: "That health of conscience which he believed that he had lost when his soul was involved in darkness, he suddenly regained, rejoicing in the Lord by the merciful illumination of the Holy Spirit, at the same time with the health of his languishing body." In a few days, to the astonishment of all his fellow-passengers, he felt as well as he had ever been in his life.

When he arrived at Tunis, at the end of the year 1291, or the beginning of the year 1292, he assembled the Mohammedan doctors, and explained to them that he was come in order to institute a comparison between Christianity (of which he had exact knowledge, and could defend with the arguments in its favour) and Mohammedanism. If he found the arguments stronger for Mohammed's doctrine, he would become a convert to it. The Mohammedan doctors assembled in great numbers, in hopes that they might succeed in converting him to Mohammedanism, and he disputed with them. But one of the Saracen doctors, who was filled with extreme fanaticism, pointed out to the king the dangers that would arise to the Mohammedan faith from Raimund's proselyting zeal, and proposed that he should be put to death. He was cast into prison, and would have been condemned to death, but one of the Saracenic doctors, more unprejudiced and wiser than the rest, interceded for him. He commended the spirit of Raimund, and said, that as the zeal of a Mohammedan, who should go among Christians, to convert them to the true faith, would be deemed praiseworthy, so they could not hesitate to honour in a Christian such zeal for the propagation of that religion which appeared to him to be the true one. These representations succeeded so far that Raimund's life was spared, and he was only ordered to leave the country. When released from prison, he met with much ill-treatment from the fanatical people. He was conveyed to the Genoese vessel in which he had come, and which was soon to sail, and informed at the same time that if he showed himself again in the territory of Tunis, he would be stoned. But since he hoped by continued exertions to convert many of the Saracenic doctors with whom he had disputed, and his anxiety for the welfare of their souls was so great, he could not make up his mind to let that hope be frustrated. Gladly

would he have sacrificed his life for such an object. He allowed that vessel to sail without him, went on board another, and sought for an opportunity to steal from it unobserved into Tunis. In September, 1292, while he was thus lying in the bay of Tunis, he had sufficient composure of mind to engage in preparing a philosophical work. After waiting here for three weeks in vain, he at last sailed in the vessel, and went to Naples. Here he spent several years, and gave lectures on his peculiar system of philosophy, till the call of a pious hermit, Peter of Myrrhone, who had been made pope by the name of Celestine V., gave him hopes that he might at last engage in the work which he had so long wished, for the promotion of missionary undertakings. But Celestine's government was too brief, and his successor Boniface VIII. felt too little interest in religious concerns.

During his residence at Rome in the year 1296, Raimund Lull composed a work which was closely related to his missionary projects, in which he aimed at demonstrating incontrovertibly the fundamental truths of the Christian religion. Although he thought too highly of his proofs, yet this was owing to the strength of his own faith. We must highly esteem the confidence of the conviction that there could be no division in the human mind; that the truth which to him was supreme, and corresponded to all the wants of his spirit, must stand in harmony with the reason and disposition of man. We must profoundly reverence the man whose exertions were sustained by the incentive that Christianity was destined to conquer the opposition of all minds, and become the religion of all nations. At the close of his book, he speaks thus: "We have composed this treatise, in order that believing and devout Christians might consider, that while the doctrines of no other religious sect can be proved to be true by its adherents, and none of the truths of Christianity are really vulnerable on the grounds of reason, the Christian faith can not only be defended against all its enemies, but can also be demonstrated. And hence, animated by the glowing zeal of faith, may they consider (since nothing can withstand the truth which is mightier than all) how they may be able by the force of argument, through the help and power of God, to lead unbelievers into the way of truth, so that the blessed name of the Lord Jesus,

which is still unknown in most parts of the world, and among most nations, may be manifested, and obtain universal adoration. This way of converting unbelievers is easier than all others. For it must appear hard to unbelievers to forsake their own faith for a foreign one; but who is there that will not feel himself compelled to surrender falsehood for truth, the self-contradictory for the necessary?" And then he adds: "On this account we humbly pray the pope and the cardinals, that they give their adhesion to this method; for of all methods of converting unbelievers, and reconquering the Holy Land, this is the easiest and speediest, which is most congenial to love, and is so much mightier than all other kinds and methods, in the proportion that spiritual weapons are more effective than carnal ones." "This treatise," he writes, "was finished at Rome in the year 1296, on the holy evening before the feast of John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord Jesus Christ. May he pray our Lord, that as he himself was the herald of light, and pointed with his finger to Him who is the true light, and as in his time, the dispensation of grace began—it may please the Lord Jesus to spread a new light over the world, that unbelievers may walk in the brightness of this light, and be converted to join with us in meeting him, the Lord Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and glory for ever!"

Being unable to attain his object in Rome he laboured for a succession of years wherever an opening presented itself; he endeavoured to convince by argument the Saracens and Jews in the island of Majorca; he visited Cyprus, and proceeded thence to Armenia, where he laboured to bring back to the orthodox faith the various sects of the Oriental church. All this he undertook with only one associate, without being able to gain the assistance of the powerful and opulent. At intervals, he delivered lectures on his philosophical system in the universities of France and Italy, and composed various works.

Between the years 1306 and 1307, he travelled again in North Africa, and visited the town of Buggia, at that time the capital of a Mohammedan kingdom. He came forward publicly, and declared, in the Arabic language, that Christianity was the only true religion and that Mohammed's doctrine was false. He wished to convince every one of this.

A great crowd of people assembled round him, and he delivered hortatory addresses to the assembly. Many raised their hands to stone him, when a mufti who heard it, hurried him away from the multitude, and called him into his presence. He asked him how he could act so madly as to appear publicly against the doctrine of Mohammed, and whether he did not know that according to the laws of the land his conduct was punishable with death. Raimund replied: "A genuine servant of Christ who has experienced in himself the truth of his faith feels no dread of death if he can secure his soul's salvation." Upon this they entered into a disputation on the relation of the two religions to one another, and Raimund testified boldly of his faith. It was at last settled, at his proposal, that a book should be written on both sides in defence of their respective religions, and it would then appear which had gained the victory by the arguments brought forward. Raimund composed such a work, and sent it to the mufti in order that he and other learned Mohammedans might examine the book and answer it. But after a few days, an order was issued to banish Raimund from the country, and at the same time the Saracens put him on board a vessel that was sailing for Genoa. This vessel was shipwrecked not far from Pisa: some of the passengers were drowned: Raimund escaped with the loss of his books and all his property. At Pisa he wrote down, from recollection, what he had composed in his work in defence of Christianity. He sent the manuscript to the pope and cardinals, and again complained, at the close of the book, on the want of zeal for the conversion of unbelievers. "The Saracens," he says, "write books for the destruction of Christianity. I have myself seen such when I was in prison; they have collected many arguments in order to convert Christians to Mohammedanism; and since the minds of these Christians are not sufficiently grounded in knowledge to discern the futility of these arguments, the Saracens have succeeded by such arguments and the promise of riches and women to gain over many Christians to their law. The Christians give themselves no concern on the subject, and lend no aid to the conversion of the Saracens; hence it comes to pass that for one Saracen who becomes a Christian, ten Christians and more become Mohammedans. It becomes

those in power to consider what the end will be of such a state of things. God will not be mocked." And after speaking further of the great danger that threatened Christendom from unbelievers, he offers some plans for averting it; one is, that four or five convents should be founded in which monks with learned and pious secular priests, who were ready to surrender their lives for the glory of God, might learn the languages spoken by unbelievers, and that then they should go forth to publish the gospel to the whole world, as Christ commanded. His second plan related to the union of various religious orders of knighthood in one, for recovering the countries taken from Christians by unbelievers, with suggestions how this could be best carried into effect. In the year 1308, in the month of April, he finished this work in the convent of the Dominicans at Pisa. What he had so often proposed, as in the work just mentioned, he at length accomplished at the Council of Vienne, in the year 1311, that an ordinance should be issued by the pope for the establishment of colleges for the oriental languages—proposing that to promote the conversion of Jews and Saracens, classes should be established for the Arabic, Chaldee, and Hebrew languages, in all the cities where the papal court was held, as well as in the universities of Paris, Oxford, and Salamanca. As to the other part of his plan, Raimund was more than ever convinced that unbelievers ought never to be conquered by the sword, but only by the force of truth; that Christians ought not to put them to death, but rather ought to be ready to sacrifice their own lives in order to bring them to salvation. In his work on the contemplation of God, in which he examines the various classes in Christendom and exposes their defects, he says:* "I see

* Multos equites video ire ad sanctam terram ultramarinam, et putare ipsam acquirere per vim armorum, et in fine omnes consumuntur, quin veniant ad id, quod putant; unde videtur mihi, quod acquisitio illius sanctæ terræ non debeat fieri, nisi eodem modo quo tu et tui apostoli eam acquisistis, scilicet amore et orationibus et effusione lacrymarum et sanguinis. Cum sanctum sepulcrum et sancta terra ultramarina, Domine, videatur debere acquiri per prædicationem, melius quam per vim armorum, progrediantur sancti equites religiosi, et muniant se signo crucis et impleant se gratia sancti Spiritus, et eant prædicare infidelibus veritatem tuæ passionis, et effundant pro tuo amore totam aquam suorum oculorum, et totum sanguinem sui corporis, sicut tu fecisti pro amore ipsorum.

many knights crossing the sea to the Holy Land, and they imagine that they shall conquer it by force of arms; but at last they are all driven away without accomplishing their object: hence it appears to me that the Holy Land can be won in no other way than as thou, O Lord Christ, and thy apostles won it—by love, by prayer, by shedding of tears and blood. Since the Holy Sepulchre and the Holy Land can be taken better by preaching than by force of arms, let the pious spiritual knights still go on and be filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May they go forth to announce thy sufferings to unbelievers; may they out of love to Thee pour out all their blood, as thou hast done out of love to them. So many knights and noble chiefs have crossed the sea to that land, in order to take it, that if this method had been pleasing to Thee, O Lord, they would have taken it before now from the Saracens. From this the pious ought to know, that thou daily expectest them to do that out of love to Thee, which thou hast done out of love to them. And they may be certain that if they expose themselves to martyrdom from love to Thee, Thou wilt hear them in all things which they wish to effect in this world for thy glory." And in another passage of the same book he says:* "Because Christians and Saracens are in a spiritual

Tot equites et nobiles principes iverunt in terram ultramarinam ad acquirendam eam, Domine, quod si tibi placeret, modus bene apparet quod eam eripuissent a Saracenis, qui contra nostram voluntatem ipsam possident: unde secundum hoc significatur sanctis religiosis, quod quotidie eos exspectes, ut faciant pro amore tui id, quod fecisti pro amore ipsorum, et possunt esse certi et securi quod si se exponant martyrio pro amore tui, eas exaudies in omni quod volent complere in hoc mundo, ad dandum laudem de te.— Raym. Lullus, *Lib. Contempl. in Deum,* cap. 112, § 10–12.

* Quia Christiani et Saraceni pugnant intellectualiter in hoc quod discordent et contrarientur in fide et credentia, propterea pugnant sensualiter, et ratione hujus pugnæ multi vulnerantur et captivantur et moriuntur et destruuntur, per quam destructionem devastantur et destruuntur multi principatus et multæ divitiæ et multæ terræ, et impediuntur multa bona quæ fierent si non esset talis pugna. Igitur, qui velit ponere pacem inter Christianos et Saracenos, Domine, et velit quod cessent magna mala quæ veniunt ex bello ipsorum, oportet quod eos pacificet in sensuali natura, ut alii possint esse inter alios et per pacem sensualem transire ad pacem intellectualem; et quando bellum intellectuale sit finitum, erit pax et concordantia inter ipsos per hoc quod habeant unam fidem et credentiam, quæ erit eis occasio et ratio pacis sensualis. Sed quia Christiani, Domine,

conflict respecting the faith, a war is also carried on by force of arms; many are wounded, taken prisoners, or killed—which would not happen if there were no such war. Whoever would establish peace between the Christians and Saracens, whoever wishes the great evils to cease which arise from their conflicts, must first of all put an end to outward contention, that outward peace may be a point of transition to spiritual peace. And when the spiritual conflict is ended, then will peace and unity reign amongst them; for they will have only one faith. But since, O Lord, Christians have no outward peace with the Saracens, they do not venture to dispute with them respecting the faith; but could they do this, it would be possible to lead them into the way of truth by the arguments of truth, and the grace of the Holy Spirit. O, heavenly Lord! Father of all times! when Thou sentest thy Son to assume human flesh, he and his apostles and disciples had outward peace with the Jews and Pharisees and other men; for they made no captives, nor killed any one, nor used

sensualiter non habent pacem cum Saracenis, propterea non audent disputare de fide cum ipsis quando sunt inter eos; et si Christiani haberent pacem sensualiter cum Saracenis, et possent disputare cum eis de fide sine bello sensuali, esset possibile quod eos dirigerent et illuminarent in via veritatis per gratiam Sancti Spiritus, et per veras rationes significatas in perfectione tuarum qualitatum. Cœlestis Domine, Pater omnium temporum! Quando tu misisti tuum Filium ad assumendum humanam carnem ipse et sui apostoli et discipuli habuerunt pacem sensualiter cum Judæis et Pharisæis et aliis hominibus, quia nunquam captivarunt nec occiderunt nec coegerunt sensualiter ullum hominem qui in te discredebant et qui ipsas persequebantur; et ideo tuus Filius et sui apostoli amarunt pacem sensualem, ut illos qui contra eos erant in via erroris adducerent ad habendum pacem intellectualem in gloria. Igitur sicut tu, Domine, et tui apostoli et discipuli habuistis pacem sensualem in hoc quod non pugnastis sensualiter licet vobis fieret bellum sensuale, ita esset valde rationabile quod Christiani haberent in memoria modum quem tu et apostoli habuistis, et irent ad habendum pacem sensualem cum Saracenis ut possent dare laudem et gloriam de te, qui mortificandi naturam sensualem attulisti in terram pacem intellectualem. Sed, quia fervor et devotio, quæ erat in apostolis et sanctis hominibus præterito tempore, non est in nobis, et fere in toto mundo est infrigidatus amor et devotio; propterea mihi videtur quod Christiani faciant vim in bello sensuali multo majorem quam in intellectuali, et ratione timoris belli sensualis nolint ire ad quærendum pacem intellectualem modo quo tu et tui apostoli eam quæsivistis effundendo angustiosam mortem ad dandum gloriam et laudem de te qui es noster Dominus Deus.—Raym. Lullus, *Ibid.* cap. 204, § 25–30.

physical force with any of those who did not believe in Thee and who persecuted them. . . . . Therefore, as Thou, O Lord, and thy disciples did not fight with carnal weapons, although such were used against Thee, it is very reasonable, that Christians should bear this in mind, and seek to have outward peace with the Saracens, that they may be able to render praise and glory to Thee, who, by mortifying the carnal nature, hast brought mental peace to the world; but because there is not that fervor and devotion in us which was in past ages in the apostles and holy men, and almost throughout the world, love and devotion have waxed cold: hence Christians apply their powers much more to carnal than to spiritual warfare; and for fear of carnal warfare they are unwilling to seek spiritual peace in the way Thou and thy apostles sought it—by pouring forth tears and groans and blood, and enduring an agonizing death to give glory and praise to Thee, who art our Lord God." "O thou true light of all lights," he says, "as thy grace, through the true faith, has enriched Christians before unbelievers, so they are bound to demonstrate the true faith to unbelievers. But since we, O Lord, are occupied with vain things, we forget our obligations to love unbelievers, to help them and to guide them, since through our fault they remain blind in the darkness of unbelief. Hence they will accuse us to Thee, O Lord, at the day of judgment for this our injustice, that we did not preach to them and instruct them, in order that they might forsake their error. And condemnation will fall on those who have no sufficient ground of excuse. If the churches, O Lord, which are of wood and stone and earth, are beautiful, because they have various figures and pictures, the holy church, which consists of the souls of just Catholic men, would be far more beautiful, if there were men acquainted with different languages, who would go through the earth, that unrighteous and unbelieving men might become praisers of thy glorious Trinity, and of thy blessed humanity, and of thy painful passion."* "Blessed are all

* Tibi Domine, Deus, sit gloria et honor, et honoratio omni tempore; quia in ecclesiis video fieri multas figuras et diversas picturas, ut sint pulchriores, sed paucos homines video, qui velint addiscere diversas linguas, et qui eant prædicare infidelibus, et eos dirigere ad veram vitam, et extrahere ab errore in quo sunt. Si ecclesiæ, Domine, quæ sunt de lignis et

those who out of love to Thee, O Lord, give alms to the poor; they help with that which thou hast given them, and whom thou helpest are truly blessed; but far more blessed are those who offer themselves to unbelievers, and become martyrs in publishing the way of truth; greater help will they obtain from Thee."

He always laments that in outward things men seek the Lord, and wish to glorify him thereby, and he points from the outward to the inward."* "Whoever would gain Thee, O Lord, need not withdraw from his own country, nor from his friends and relations, for he can find Thee near at hand—he can gain Thee in his own house." "We see," he says, how pilgrims set out to seek Thee in distant lands, and thou art so near, that whoever will, can find Thee in his own house, in his own chamber; wherefore there are many men so ignorant that they set out to seek for Thee in distant lands, and take the devil with them, if they are laden with sins. The things which man wishes to find he must carefully seek for, and seek them in places where they can be found. If, therefore, the pilgrims wish to find Thee, they must seek for Thee carefully, and not seek for Thee in the beautiful images and paintings of churches, but in the hearts of holy men, in whom thou dwellest day and night." "If Thy image, O Lord, is beautiful as seen on the cross, much more beautiful is it when beheld in religious men and lovers of truth; for the figure of the religious man is nearer in nature and likeness to thy humanity than the crucifix, since

lapidibus et terra sunt pulchræ, quia habent diversas figuras et picturas, sancta ecclesia, quæ consistit in animabus hominum justorum catholicorum, esset valde pulchrior, si essent homines, qui scirent diversas linguas, et irent per omnes terras, ut homines injusti et infideles essent laudatores tuæ gloriosæ Trinitatis et tuæ benedictæ humanitatis et tuæ angustiosæ passionis.—Raym. Lullus, *Ibid.* cap. 106, § 28, 29.

* Nos videmus, Domine, multas merces esse in quibus homo non potest lucrari, nisi eat ad quærendum et deferendum eas a longinquis terris, et per longas vias; sed qui te vult lucrari, non oportet elongare se a sua terra nec a suis cognatis nec a suis amicis, quia prope potest te invenire, et in sua domo potest te lucrari. Etiam videmus, Domine, quod, quando mercatores veniunt a suis peregrinationibus et fecerunt lucrum deferant munera, quæ dant suis amicis et vicinis: igitur cum ego adeo parum lucratus fuerim in hoc mundo, si nunc morerer, pauca essent munera et bona opera quæ deferrem in alterum sæculum.—Raym. Lullus, *Ibid.* cap. 116, § 13, p. 261.

the figure which we see on the cross is a resemblance in wood, but the religious man is of the same kind as thy glorious humanity."* "Often," he says, "I have sought Thee on the crucifix, and my bodily eyes could not find Thee there; but they have found there thy form, and the representation of thy death. And when I could not find Thee with my bodily eyes, I have sought Thee with the eyes of my soul, and by thinking and remembering my soul has found Thee, and as soon as I found Thee my heart began to grow warm with the glow of love, and my eyes to shed tears, and my mouth to praise Thee."† The glow of love gave him no rest, until, summoning his remaining powers, he exhausted his life in publishing the gospel. "As the needle," he says, "turns by nature to the north when it is touched by the magnet, so it behoves that thy servant should turn to praise his Lord God, and to serve him, since out of love to him he willed to endure sore griefs and heavy sufferings in this world."‡ "Men who die of old age," he says, "die owing to the want "of natural warmth and an excess of cold; and, therefore, may thy servant, if it please Thee, not die such a death, but die owing the glow of love, since Thou wert willing to die such a death. I have often shivered from great cold and fright, but when will that day and that hour be, when my body will

* Si tuum exemplum, Domine, est pulchrum ad videndum in cruce, multo pulchrius est ad videndum in hominibus religiosis et amatoribus veritatis; quia propinquior est in natura et similitudine tuæ humanitati figura beati religiosi, quam figura crucis; quoniam figura, quam videmus in cruce, est pictura in ligno, sed beatus religiosus est illius speciei, cujus est tua gloriosa humanitas.—Raym. Lullus, *Ibid.* cap. 123, § 20, p. 281.

† Amorose Domine! Tuus subditus multoties te quæsivi in cruce, et mei oculi corporales nunquam potuerunt te in ea invenire; sed bene invenerunt in ea tuam figuram et repræsentationem tuæ mortis; et quando non poteram te invenire oculis corporalibus, te quærebam oculis meæ animæ, et cogitando et memorando in te mea anima inveniebat te, et per inventionem tui statim incipiebat meum cor calefieri calore amoris, et mei oculi plorare, et meum os te laudare.—Raym. Lullus, *Ibid.* cap. 113, § 23, p. 254.

‡ Sicut acus per naturam vertitur ad septentrionem dum sit tacta a magnete, ita oportet, quod tuus servus se vertat ad amandum et laudandum suum Dominum Deum, et ad serviendum ei quoniam pro suo amore voluit in hoc mundo sustinere graves dolores et graves passiones.—Raym. Lullus, *Ibid.* cap. 129, § 19, p. 296.

tremble, owing to the great glow of love, and its great desire to die for its Saviour?"

We would here bring together at the close some short passages, in which the deep glowing spirit of this eminent man expressed itself—words which contain a world of meaning, and which a man must ponder deeply, in order rightly to understand and fully to fathom. "He who loves not, lives not; he who lives by the Life cannot die." "He who gives his friend love, gives him more than untold gold." "He who gives not, lives not." "All gold is not to be compared with a sigh of holy desire." "The more any one desires, the more will he know what it is to live. To be stript of desire is to die. Desire, and thou wilt live. He is not poor who desires; he lives sorrowfully who has no desire."* "A holy hermit stands higher in the favour of God than a king upon his throne. Elevate thy knowledge, and thou wilt elevate thy love. Heaven is not so high as the love of a holy man. The more thou labourest to ascend, so much more thou wilt ascend."† He was aware that man carries in his own being the key for all men. "He who would examine and understand the mysteries of other men, let him first look into himself, and into his own nature. For as a glass shows in itself the form of any other object, so man by knowing his own nature, perceives the secrets which he seeks for in others."‡

On the 14th of August, 1314, he again crossed over to Africa. He went to Buggia and laboured here first of all in secret, in the small circle of those persons whom he had won

* Desidera et vives. Non est pauper qui desiderat. Plus valet suspirium in desiderio quam honor in principe. Qui non desiderat, non attingit. Tristis vivit qui non desiderat.—Raym. Lullus, *Ibid.* p. 38.

† Sanctus eremita stat altior in voluntate Dei quam rex in throno.
Quo plus valebis, eo altior eris.
Eleva tuum intelligere, et elevabis tuum amare.
Cœlum non est tam altum, sicut amare sancti homines.
Quo magis laborabis ad ascendendum eo magis ascendes.
Raym. Lullus, *Lib. Proverb.* tom. vi. p. 34.

‡ Qui vult inquirere et percipere secreta aliorum hominum, respiciat seipsum et suam naturam et suammet proprietatem; quia, sicut unum speculum demonstrat formam alterius in seipso, ita homo cognoscendo suammet naturam percipit secreta quæ inquirit in aliis.—Raym. Lullus, *Lib. Contempl. in Deum,* cap. 174, § 25, tom. ix. p. 412.

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